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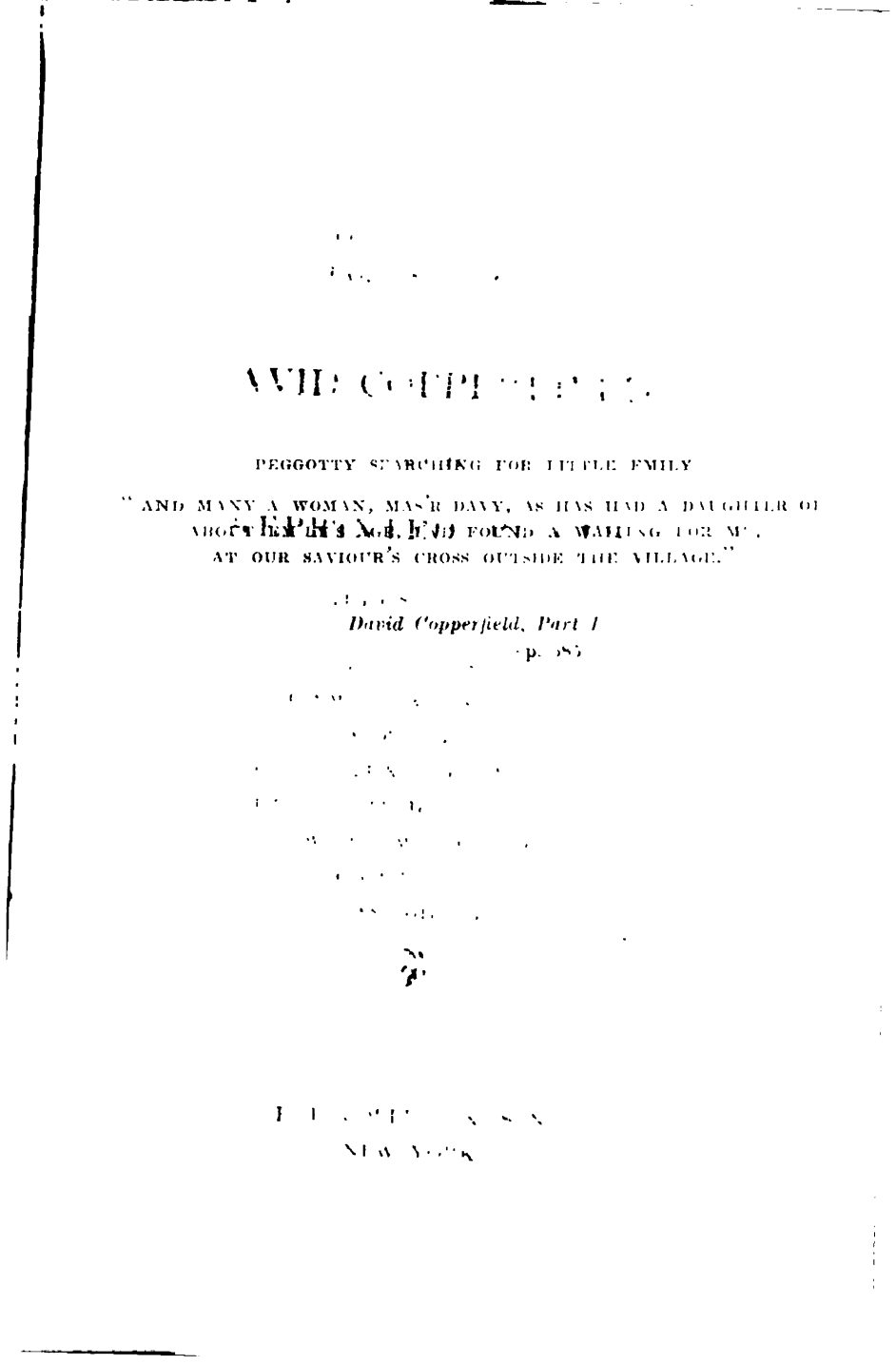

PEGGOTTY SEARCHING FOR LITTLE EMILY

"AND MANY A WOMAN, MAS'R DAVY, AS HAS HAD A DAUGHTER OF
[illegible] FOUND A WAILING FOR ME,
AT OUR SAVIOUR'S CROSS OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE."

David Copperfield, Part I

p. 85

THE WORKS OF
CHARLES DICKENS

DAVID COPPERFIELD

Part II

REPRINTED PIECES

ILLUSTRATED

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, CRITICAL
COMMENTS, AND NOTES BY
ANDREW LANG
CHARLES DICKENS THE YOUNGER
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GEORGE GISSING
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CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

CHAPTER		PAGE
XLII.	Mischief,	607
XLIII.	Another Retrospect,	627
XLIV.	Our Housekeeping,	635
XLV.	Mr. Dick fulfils my Aunt's Predictions,	650
XLVI.	Intelligence,	666
XLVII.	Martha,	680
XLVIII.	Domestic,	691
XLIX.	I am Involved in Mystery,	703
L.	Mr. Peggotty's Dream comes True,	715
LI.	The Beginning of a Longer Journey,	725
LII.	I Assist at an Explosion,	743
LIII.	Another Retrospect,	767
LIV.	Mr. Micawber's Transactions,	772
LV.	Tempest,	788
LVI.	The New Wound, and the Old,	799
LVII.	The Emigrants,	806
LVIII.	Absence,	817
LIX.	Return,	823
LX.	Agnes,	840
LXI.	I am Shown Two Interesting Penitents,	849
LXII.	A Light Shines on my Way,	861
LXIII.	A Visitor,	870
LXIV.	A Last Retrospect,	878

REPRINTED PIECES.

CHAPTER XLII.

MISCHIEF.

I FEEL as if it were not for me to record, even though this manuscript is intended for no eyes but mine, how hard I worked at that tremendous shorthand, and all improvement appertaining to it, in my sense of responsibility to Dora and her aunts. I will only add, to what I have already written of my perseverance at this time of my life, and of a patient and continuous energy which then began to be matured within me, and which I know to be the strong part of my character, if it have any strength at all, that there, on looking back, I find the source of my success. I have been very fortunate in worldly matters; many men have worked much harder, and not succeeded half so well; but I never could have done what I have done, without the habits of punctuality, order, and diligence, without the determination to concentrate myself on one object at a time, no matter how quickly its successor should come upon its heels, which I then formed. Heaven knows I write this, in no spirit of self-laudation. The man who reviews his own life, as I do mine, in going on here, from page to page, had need to have been a good man indeed, if he would be spared the sharp consciousness of many talents neglected, many opportunities wasted, many erratic and perverted feelings constantly at war within his breast, and defeating him. I do not hold one natural gift, I daresay, that I have not abused. My meaning simply is, that whatever I have tried to do in life, I have tried with all my heart to do well; that whatever I have devoted myself to, I have devoted myself to completely; that, in great aims and in small, I have always been thoroughly in earnest. I have never believed it possible that any natural or improved ability can claim immunity from the companionship of the steady, plain, hard-working qualities, and hope to gain its end. There is no such thing as such fulfilment on this earth. Some happy talent, and some fortunate opportunity, may form the two sides of the ladder on which some men mount, but the rounds of that ladder must be made of stuff to stand wear

and tear; and there is no substitute for thorough-going, ardent, and sincere earnestness. Never to put one hand to anything, on which I could throw my whole self; and never to affect depreciation of my work, whatever it was; I find, now, to have been my golden rules.

How much of the practice I have just reduced to precept, I owe to Agnes, I will not repeat here. My narrative proceeds to Agnes, with a thankful love.

She came on a visit of a fortnight to the Doctor's. Mr. Wickfield was the Doctor's old friend, and the Doctor wished to talk with him, and do him good. It had been matter of conversation with Agnes when she was last in town, and this visit was the result. She and her father came together. I was not much surprised to hear from her that she had engaged to find a lodging in the neighbourhood for Mrs. Heep, whose rheumatic complaint required change of air, and who would be charmed to have it in such company. Neither was I surprised when, on the very next day, Uriah, like a dutiful son, brought his worthy mother to take possession.

"You see, Master Copperfield," said he, as he forced himself upon my company for a turn in the Doctor's garden, "where a person loves, a person is a little jealous—leastways, anxious to keep an eye on the beloved one."

"Of whom are you jealous, now?" said I.

"Thanks to you, Master Copperfield," he returned, "of no one in particular just at present—no male person, at least."

"Do you mean that you are jealous of a female person?"

He gave me a sidelong glance out of his sinister red eyes, and laughed.

"Really, Master Copperfield," he said, "—I should say Mister, but I know you'll excuse the abit I've got into—you're so insinuating, that you draw me like a corkscrew! Well, I don't mind telling you," putting his fish-like hand on mine, "I'm not a lady's man in general, Sir, and I never was, with Mrs. Strong."

His eyes looked green now, as they watched mine with a rascally cunning.

"What do you mean?" said I.

"Why, though I am a lawyer, Master Copperfield," he replied, with a dry grin, "I mean, just at present, what I say."

"And what do you mean by your look?" I retorted, quietly.

"By my look? Dear me, Copperfield, that's sharp practice! What do I mean by my look?"

"Yes," said I. "By your look."

He seemed very much amused, and laughed as heartily as it was in his nature to laugh. After some scraping of his chin with his hand, he went on to say, with his eyes cast downward—still scraping, very slowly:

"When I was but a numble clerk, she always looked down upon me. She was for ever having my Agnes backwards and forwards at her ouse, and she was for ever being a friend to you, Master Copperfield; but I was too far beneath her, myself, to be noticed."

"Well?" said I; "suppose you were!"

"—And beneath him too," pursued Uriah, very distinctly, and in a meditative tone of voice, as he continued to scrape his chin.

"Don't you know the Doctor better," said I, "than to suppose him conscious of your existence, when you were not before him?"

He directed his eyes at me in that sidelong glance again, and he made his face very lantern-jawed, for the greater convenience of scraping, as he answered:

"Oh dear, I am not referring to the Doctor! Oh no, poor man! I mean Mr. Maldon!"

My heart quite died within me. All my old doubts, and apprehensions on that subject, all the Doctor's happiness and peace, all the mingled possibilities of innocence and compromise, that I could not unravel, I saw, in a moment, at the mercy of this fellow's twisting.

"He never could come into the office, without ordering and shoving me about," said Uriah. "One of your fine gentlemen he was! I was very meek and umble—and I am. But I didn't like that sort of thing—and I don't!"

He left off scraping his chin, and sucked in his cheeks until they seemed to meet inside; keeping his sidelong glance upon me all the while.

"She is one of your lovely women, she is," he pursued, when he had slowly restored his face to its natural form; "and ready to be no friend to such as me, *I* know. She's just the person as would put my Agnes up to higher sort of game. Now, I ain't one of your lady's men, Master

Copperfield; but I've had eyes in my ed, a pretty long time back. We umble ones have got eyes, mostly speaking—and we look out of 'em."

I endeavoured to appear unconscious and not disquieted, but, I saw in his face, with poor success.

"Now, I'm not a going to let myself be run down, Copperfield," he continued, raising that part of his countenance where his red eyebrows would have been if he had had any, with malignant triumph, "and I shall do what I can to put a stop to this friendship. I don't approve of it. I don't mind acknowledging to you that I've got rather a grudging disposition, and want to keep off all intruders. I ain't a going, if I know it, to run the risk of being plotted against."

"You are always plotting, and delude yourself into the belief that everybody else is doing the like, I think," said I.

"Perhaps so, Master Copperfield," he replied. "But I've got a motive, as my fellow-partner used to say; and I go at it tooth and nail. I mustn't be put upon, as a numble person, too much. I can't allow people in my way. Really they must come out of the cart, Master Copperfield!"

"I don't understand you," said I.

"Don't you, though?" he returned, with one of his jerks. "I'm astonished at that, Master Copperfield, you being usually so quick! I'll try to be plainer, another time.—Is that Mr. Maldon a-norseback, ringing at the gate, Sir?"

"It looks like him," I replied, as carelessly as I could.

Uriah stopped short, put his hands between his great knobs of knees, and doubled himself up with laughter. With perfectly silent laughter. Not a sound escaped from him. I was so repelled by his odious behaviour, particularly by this concluding instance that I turned away without any ceremony; and left him doubled up in the middle of the garden, like a scarecrow in want of support.

It was not on that evening; but, as I well remember, on the next evening but one, which was a Saturday; that I took Agnes to see Dora. I had arranged the visit, beforehand, with Miss Lavinia; and Agnes was expected to tea.

I was in a flutter of pride and anxiety; pride in my dear little betrothed, and anxiety that Agnes should like her. All the way to Putney, Agnes being inside the stage-coach, and I outside, I pictured Dora to myself in every one of the pretty looks I knew so well; now making up my mind

that I should like her to look exactly as she looked at such a time, and then doubting whether I should not prefer her looking as she looked at such another time; and almost worrying myself into a fever about it.

I was troubled by no doubt of her being very pretty, in any case; but it fell out that I had never seen her look so well. She was not in the drawing-room when I presented Agnes to her little aunts, but was shyly keeping out of the way. I knew where to look for her, now; and sure enough I found her stopping her ears again, behind the same dull old door.

At first she wouldn't come at all; and then she pleaded for five minutes by my watch. When at length she put her arm through mine, to be taken to the drawing-room, her charming little face was flushed, and had never been so pretty. But, when we went into the room, and it turned pale, she was ten thousand times prettier yet.

Dora was afraid of Agnes. She had told me that she knew Agnes was "too clever." But when she saw her looking at once so cheerful and so earnest, and so thoughtful, and so good, she gave a faint little cry of pleased surprise, and just put her affectionate arms round Agnes's neck, and laid her innocent cheek against her face.

I never was so happy. I never was so pleased as when I saw those two sit down together, side by side. As when I saw my little darling looking up so naturally to those cordial eyes. As when I saw the tender, beautiful regard which Agnes cast upon her.

Miss Lavinia and Miss Clarissa partook, in their way, of my joy. It was the pleasantest tea-table in the world. Miss Clarissa presided. I cut and handed the sweet seed-cake—the little sisters had a birdlike fondness for picking up seeds and pecking at sugar; Miss Lavinia looked on with benignant patronage, as if our happy love were all her work; and we were perfectly contented with ourselves and one another.

The gentle cheerfulness of Agnes went to all their hearts. Her quiet interest in everything that interested Dora; her manner of making acquaintance with Jip (who responded instantly); her pleasant way, when Dora was ashamed to come over to her usual seat by me; her modest grace and ease, eliciting a crowd of blushing little marks of confidence from Dora; seemed to make our circle quite complete.

"I am so glad," said Dora, after tea, "that you like me. I didn't think you would; and I want, more than ever, to be liked, now Julia Mills is gone."

I have omitted to mention it, by-the-bye. Miss Mills had sailed, and Dora and I had gone aboard a great East Indiaman at Gravesend to see her; and we had had preserved ginger, and guava, and other delicacies of that sort for lunch; and we had left Miss Mills weeping on a camp-stool on the quarter-deck, with a large new diary under her arm, in which the original reflections awakened by the contemplation of Ocean were to be recorded under lock and key.

Agnes said, she was afraid, I must have given her an unpromising character; but Dora corrected that directly.

"Oh no!" she said, shaking her curls at me; "it was all praise. He thinks so much of your opinion, that I was quite afraid of it."

"My good opinion cannot strengthen his attachment to some people whom he knows," said Agnes, with a smile; "it is not worth their having."

"But please let me have it," said Dora, in her coaxing way, "if you can!"

We made merry about Dora's wanting to be liked, and Dora said I was a goose, and she didn't like me at any rate, and the short evening flew away on gossamer-wings. The time was at hand when the coach was to call for us. I was standing alone before the fire, when Dora came stealing softly in, to give me that usual precious little kiss before I went.

"Don't you think, if I had had her for a friend a long time ago, Doady," said Dora, her bright eyes shining very brightly, and her little right hand idly busying itself with one of the buttons of my coat, "I might have been more clever perhaps?"

"My love!" said I, "what nonsense!"

"Do you think it is nonsense?" returned Dora, without looking at me. "Are you sure it is?"

"Of course I am!"

"I have forgotten," said Dora, still turning the button round and round, "what relation Agnes is to you, you dear bad boy."

"No blood-relation," I replied; "but we were brought up together, like brother and sister."

"I wonder why you ever fell in love with me?" said Dora, beginning on another button of my coat.

"Perhaps because I couldn't see you, and not love you, Dora!"

"Suppose you had never seen me at all," said Dora, going to another button.

"Suppose we had never been born!" said I, gaily.

I wondered what she was thinking about, as I glanced in admiring silence at the little soft hand travelling up the row of buttons on my coat, and at the clustering hair that lay against my breast, and at the lashes of her downcast eyes, slightly rising as they followed her idle fingers. At length her eyes were lifted up to mine, and she stood on tiptoe to give me, more thoughtfully than usual, that precious little kiss—once, twice, three times—and went out of the room.

They all came back together within five minutes afterwards, and Dora's unusual thoughtfulness was quite gone then. She was laughingly resolved to put Jip through the whole of his performances, before the coach came. They took some time (not so much on account of their variety, as Jip's reluctance), and were still unfinished when it was heard at the door. There was a hurried but affectionate parting between Agnes and herself; and Dora was to write to Agnes (who was not to mind her letters being foolish, she said), and Agnes was to write to Dora; and they had a second parting at the coach-door, and a third when Dora, in spite of the remonstrances of Miss Lavinia, would come running out once more to remind Agnes at the coach-window about writing, and to shake her curls at me on the box.

The stage-coach was to put us down near Covent Garden, where we were to take another stage-coach for Highgate. I was impatient for the short walk in the interval, that Agnes might praise Dora to me. Ah! what praise it was! How lovingly and fervently did it commend the pretty creature I had won, with all her artless graces best displayed, to my most gentle care. How thoughtfully remind me, yet with no pretence of doing so, of the trust in which I held the orphan child!

Never, never, had I loved Dora so deeply and truly, as I loved her that night. When we had again alighted, and were walking in the starlight along the quiet road that led to the Doctor's house, I told Agnes it was her doing.

"When you were sitting by her," said I, "you seemed to be no less *her* guardian angel than mine; and you seem so now, Agnes."

"A poor angel," she returned, "but faithful."

The clear tone of her voice, going straight to my heart, made it natural to me to say:

"The cheerfulness that belongs to you, Agnes (and to no one else that ever I have seen), is so restored, I have observed to-day, that I have begun to hope you are happier at home?"

"I am happier in myself," she said; "I am quite cheerful and light-hearted."

I glanced at the serene face looking upward, and thought it was the stars that made it seem so noble.

"There has been no change at home," said Agnes, after a few moments.

"No fresh reference," said I, "to—I wouldn't distress you, Agnes, but I cannot help asking—to what we spoke of, when we parted last?"

"No, none," she answered.

"I have thought so much about it."

"You must think less about it. Remember that I confide in simple love and truth at last. Have no apprehensions for me, Trotwood," she added, after a moment; "the step you dread my taking, I shall never take."

Although I think I had never really feared it, in any season of cool reflection, it was an unspeakable relief to me to have this assurance from her own truthful lips. I told her so, earnestly.

"And when this visit is over," said I,—"for we may not be alone another time,—how long is it likely to be, my dear Agnes, before you come to London again?"

"Probably a long time," she replied; "I think it will be best—for papa's sake—to remain at home. We are not likely to meet often, for some time to come; but I shall be a good correspondent of Dora's, and we shall frequently hear of one another that way."

We were now within the little courtyard of the Doctor's cottage. It was growing late. There was a light in the window of Mrs. Strong's chamber, and Agnes, pointing to it, bade me good night.

"Do not be troubled," she said, giving me her hand, "by our misfortunes and anxieties. I can be happier in nothing

than in your happiness. If you can ever give me help, rely upon it I will ask you for it. God bless you always!"

In her beaming smile, and in these last tones of her cheerful voice, I seemed again to see and hear my little Dora in her company. I stood awhile, looking through the porch at the stars, with a heart full of love and gratitude, and then walked slowly forth. I had engaged a bed at a decent alehouse close by, and was going out at the gate, when, happening to turn my head, I saw a light in the Doctor's study. A half-reproachful fancy came into my mind, that he had been working at the Dictionary without my help. With the view of seeing if this were so, and, in any case, of bidding him good night, if he were yet sitting among his books, I turned back, and going softly across the hall, and gently opening the door, looked in.

The first person whom I saw, to my surprise, by the sober light of the shaded lamp, was Uriah. He was standing close beside it, with one of his skeleton hands over his mouth, and the other resting on the Doctor's table. The Doctor sat in his study chair, covering his face with his hands. Mr. Wickfield, sorely troubled and distressed, was leaning forward, irresolutely touching the Doctor's arm.

For an instant, I supposed that the Doctor was ill. I hastily advanced a step under that impression, when I met Uriah's eye, and saw what was the matter. I would have withdrawn, but the Doctor made a gesture to detain me, and I remained.

"At any rate," observed Uriah, with a writhe of his ungainly person, "we may keep the door shut. We needn't make it known to ALL the town."

Saying which, he went on his toes to the door, which I had left open, and carefully closed it. He then came back, and took up his former position. There was an obtrusive show of compassionate zeal in his voice and manner, more intolerable—at least to me—than any demeanour he could have assumed.

"I have felt it incumbent upon me, Master Copperfield," said Uriah, "to point out to Doctor Strong what you and me have already talked about. You didn't exactly understand me, though?"

I gave him a look, but no other answer; and, going to my good old master, said a few words that I meant to be words of comfort and encouragement. He put his hand

upon my shoulder, as it had been his custom to do when I was quite a little fellow, but did not lift his grey head.

"As you didn't understand me, Master Copperfield," resumed Uriah in the same officious manner, "I may take the liberty of umbly mentioning, being among friends, that I have called Doctor Strong's attention to the goings-on of Mrs. Strong. It's much against the grain with me, I assure you, Copperfield, to be concerned in anything so unpleasant; but really, as it is, we're all mixing ourselves up with what oughtn't to be. That was what my meaning was, Sir, when you didn't understand me."

I wonder now, when I recall his leer, that I did not collar him, and try to shake the breath out of his body.

"I dare say I didn't make myself very clear," he went on, "nor you neither. Naturally, we was both of us inclined to give such a subject a wide berth. Hows'ever, at last I have made up my mind to speak plain; and I have mentioned to Doctor Strong that—did you speak, Sir?"

This was to the Doctor, who had moaned. The sound might have touched any heart, I thought, but it had no effect upon Uriah's.

"—mentioned to Doctor Strong," he proceeded, "that anyone may see that Mr. Maldon, and the lovely and agreeable lady as is Doctor Strong's wife, are too sweet on one another. Really the time is come (we being at present all mixing ourselves up with what oughtn't to be), when Doctor Strong must be told that this was full as plain to everybody as the sun, before Mr. Maldon went to India; that Mr. Maldon made excuses to come back, for nothing else; and that he's always here, for nothing else. When you come in, Sir, I was just putting it to my fellow-partner," towards whom he turned, "to say to Doctor Strong upon his word and honour, whether he'd ever been of this opinion long ago, or not. Come, Mr. Wickfield, Sir! Would you be so good as tell us? Yes or no, Sir? Come, partner!"

"For God's sake, my dear Doctor," said Mr. Wickfield, again laying his irresolute hand upon the Doctor's arm, "don't attach too much weight to any suspicions I may have entertained."

"There!" cried Uriah, shaking his head. "What a melancholy confirmation; ain't it? Him! Such an old friend! Bless your soul, when I was nothing but a clerk

in his office, Copperfield, I've seen him twenty times, if I've seen him once, quite in a taking about it—quite put out, you know (and very proper in him as a father; I'm sure *I* can't blame him), to think that Miss Agnes was mixing herself up with what oughtn't to be."

"My dear Strong," said Mr. Wickfield in a tremulous voice, "my good friend, I needn't tell you that it has been my vice to look for some one master motive in everybody, and to try all actions by one narrow test. I may have fallen into such doubts as I have had, through this mistake."

"You have had doubts, Wickfield," said the Doctor, without lifting up his head. "You have had doubts."

"Speak up, fellow-partner," urged Uriah.

"I had, at one time, certainly," said Mr. Wickfield. "I —God forgive me—I thought *you* had."

"No, no, no!" returned the Doctor, in a tone of most pathetic grief.

"I thought, at one time," said Mr. Wickfield, "that you wished to send Maldon abroad to effect a desirable separation."

"No, no, no!" returned the Doctor. "To give Annie pleasure, by making some provision for the companion of her childhood. Nothing else."

"So I found," said Mr. Wickfield. "I couldn't doubt it, when you told me so. But I thought—I implore you to remember the narrow construction which has been my besetting sin—that, in a case where there was so much disparity in point of years——"

"That's the way to put it, you see, Master Copperfield!" observed Uriah, with fawning and offensive pity.

"—a lady of such youth, and such attractions, however real her respect for you, might have been influenced in marrying, by worldly considerations only. I made no allowance for innumerable feelings and circumstances that may have all tended to good. For Heaven's sake remember that!"

"How kind he puts it!" said Uriah, shaking his head.

"Always observing her from one point of view," said Mr. Wickfield; "but by all that is dear to you, my old friend, I entreat you to consider what it was; I am forced to confess now, having no escape——"

"No! There's no way out of it, Mr. Wickfield, Sir," observed Uriah, "when it's got to this."

"—that I did," said Mr. Wickfield, glancing helplessly and distractedly at his partner, "that I did doubt her, and think her wanting in her duty to you; and that I did sometimes, if I must say all, feel averse to Agnes being in such a familiar relation towards her, as to see what I saw, or in my diseased theory fancied that I saw. I never mentioned this to anyone. I never meant it to be known to anyone. And though it is terrible to you to hear," said Mr. Wickfield, quite subdued, "if you knew how terrible it is for me to tell, you would feel compassion for me!"

The Doctor, in the perfect goodness of his nature, put out his hand. Mr. Wickfield held it for a little while in his, with his head bowed down.

"I am sure," said Uriah, writhing himself into the silence like a conger-eel, "that this is a subject full of unpleasantness to everybody. But since we have got so far, I ought to take the liberty of mentioning that Copperfield has noticed it too."

I turned upon him, and asked him how he dared refer to me!

"Oh! it's very kind of you, Copperfield," returned Uriah, undulating all over, "and we all know what an amiable character yours is; but you know that the moment I spoke to you the other night, you knew what I meant. You know you knew what I meant, Copperfield. Don't deny it! You deny it with the best intentions; but don't do it, Copperfield!"

I saw the mild eye of the good old Doctor turned upon me for a moment, and I felt that the confession of my old misgivings and remembrances was too plainly written in my face to be overlooked. It was of no use raging. I could not undo that. Say what I would, I could not unsay it.

We were silent again, and remained so, until the Doctor rose and walked twice or thrice across the room. Presently he returned to where his chair stood; and, leaning on the back of it, and occasionally putting his handkerchief to his eyes, with a simple honesty that did him more honour, to my thinking, than any disguise he could have affected, said:

"I have been much to blame. I believe I have been very much to blame. I have exposed one whom I hold in my heart, to trials and aspersions—I call them aspersions, even

to have been conceived in anybody's inmost mind—of which she never, but for me, could have been the object."

Uriah Heep gave a kind of snivel. I think to express sympathy.

"Of which my Annie," said the Doctor, "never, but for me, could have been the object. Gentlemen, I am old now, as you know; I do not feel, to-night, that I have much to live for. But my life—my life—upon the truth and honour of the dear lady who has been the subject of this conversation!"

I do not think that the best embodiment of chivalry, the realisation of the handsomest and most romantic figure ever imagined by painter, could have said this with a more impressive and affecting dignity than the plain old Doctor did.

"But I am not prepared," he went on, "to deny—perhaps I may have been, without knowing it, in some degree prepared to admit—that I may have unwittingly ensnared that lady into an unhappy marriage. I am a man quite unaccustomed to observe; and I cannot but believe that the observation of several people, of different ages and positions, all too plainly tending in one direction (and that so natural), is better than mine."

I had often admired, as I have elsewhere described, his benignant manner towards his youthful wife; but the respectful tenderness he manifested in every reference to her on this occasion, and the almost reverential manner in which he put away from him the lightest doubt of her integrity, exalted him, in my eyes, beyond description.

"I married that lady," said the Doctor, "when she was extremely young. I took her to myself when her character was scarcely formed. So far as it was developed, it had been my happiness to form it. I knew her father well. I knew her well. I had taught her what I could, for the love of all her beautiful and virtuous qualities. If I did her wrong; as I fear I did, in taking advantage (but I never meant it) of her gratitude and her affection; I ask pardon of that lady, in my heart!"

He walked across the room, and came back to the same place; holding the chair with a grasp that trembled, like his subdued voice, in its earnestness.

"I regarded myself as a refuge, for her, from the dangers and vicissitudes of life. I persuaded myself that, unequal though we were in years, she would live tranquilly and contentedly with me. I did not shut out of my considera-

tion the time when I should leave her free, and still young and still beautiful, but with her judgment more matured—no, gentlemen—upon my truth!"

His homely figure seemed to be lightened up by his fidelity and generosity. Every word he uttered had a force that no other grace could have imparted to it.

"My life with this lady has been very happy. Until to-night, I have had uninterrupted occasion to bless the day on which I did her great injustice."

His voice, more and more faltering in the utterance of these words, stopped for a few moments; then he went on:

"Once awakened from my dream—I have been a poor dreamer, in one way or other, all my life—I see how natural it is that she should have some regretful feeling towards her old companion and her equal. That she does regard him with some innocent regret, with some blameless thoughts of what might have been, but for me, is, I fear, too true. Much that I have seen, but not noted, has come back upon me with new meaning, during this last trying hour. But, beyond this, gentlemen, the dear lady's name never must be coupled with a word, a breath, of doubt."

For a little while, his eye kindled and his voice was firm; for a little while he was again silent. Presently, he proceeded as before:

"It only remains for me, to bear the knowledge of the unhappiness I have occasioned, as submissively as I can. It is she who should reproach; not I. To save her from misconstruction, cruel misconstruction, that even my friends have not been able to avoid, becomes my duty. The more retired we live, the better I shall discharge it. And when the time comes—may it come soon, if it be His merciful pleasure!—when my death shall release her from constraint, I shall close my eyes upon her honoured face, with unbounded confidence and love; and leave her, with no sorrow then, to happier and brighter days."

I could not see him for the tears which his earnestness and goodness, so adorned by, and so adorning, the perfect simplicity of his manner, brought into my eyes. He had moved to the door, when he added:

"Gentlemen, I have shown you my heart. I am sure you will respect it. What we have said to-night is never to be said more. Wickfield, give me an old friend's arm up-stairs!"

Mr. Wickfield hastened to him. Without interchanging a word they went slowly out of the room together, Uriah looking after them.

"Well, Master Copperfield!" said Uriah, meekly turning to me. "The thing hasn't took quite the turn that might have been expected, for the old Scholar—what an excellent man!—is as blind as a brick-bat; but *this* family's out of the cart, I think!"

I needed but the sound of his voice to be so madly enraged as I never was before, and never have been since.

"You villain," said I, "what do you mean by entrapping me into your schemes? How dare you appeal to me just now, you false rascal, as if we had been in discussion together?"

As we stood, front to front, I saw so plainly, in the stealthy exultation of his face, what I already so plainly knew; I mean that he forced his confidence upon me, expressly to make me miserable, and had set a deliberate trap for me in this very matter; that I couldn't bear it. The whole of his lank cheek was invitingly before me, and I struck it with my open hand with that force that my fingers tingled as if I had burnt them.

He caught the hand in his, and we stood, in that connexion, looking at each other. We stood so, a long time; long enough for me to see the white marks of my fingers die out of the deep red of his cheek, and leave it a deeper red.

"Copperfield," he said at length, in a breathless voice, "have you taken leave of your senses?"

"I have taken leave of you," said I, wresting my hand away. "You dog, I'll know no more of you."

"Won't you?" said he, constrained by the pain of his cheek to put his hand there. "Perhaps you won't be able to help it. Isn't this ungrateful of you, now?"

"I have shown you often enough," said I, "that I despise you. I have shown you now, more plainly, that I do. Why should I dread your doing your worst to all about you? What else do you ever do?"

He perfectly understood this allusion to the considerations that had hitherto restrained me in my communications with him. I rather think that neither the blow, nor the allusion, would have escaped me, but for the assurance I had had from Agnes that night. It is no matter.

There was another long pause. His eyes, as he looked at me, seemed to take every shade of colour that could make eyes ugly.

"Copperfield," he said, removing his hand from his cheek, "you have always gone against me. I know you always used to be against me at Mr. Wickfield's."

"You may think what you like," said I, still in a towering rage. "If it is not true, so much the worthier you."

"And yet I always liked you, Copperfield!" he rejoined.

I deigned to make him no reply; and, taking up my hat, was going out to bed, when he came between me and the door.

"Copperfield," he said, "there must be two parties to a quarrel. I won't be one."

"You may go to the devil!" said I.

"Don't say that!" he replied. "I know you'll be sorry afterwards. How can you make yourself so inferior to me, as to show such a bad spirit? But I forgive you."

"You forgive me!" I repeated disdainfully.

"I do, and you can't help yourself," replied Uriah. "To think of your going and attacking *me*, that have always been a friend to you! But there can't be a quarrel without two parties, and I won't be one. I will be a friend to you, in spite of you. So now you know what you've got to expect."

The necessity of carrying on this dialogue (his part in which was very slow; mine very quick) in a low tone, that the house might not be disturbed at an unseasonable hour, did not improve my temper; though my passion was cooling down. Merely telling him that I should expect from him what I always had expected, and had never yet been disappointed in, I opened the door upon him, as if he had been a great walnut put there to be cracked, and went out of the house. But he slept out of the house too, at his mother's lodging; and before I had gone many hundred yards, came up with me.

"You know, Copperfield," he said, in my ear (I did not turn my head), "you're in quite a wrong position;" which I felt to be true, and that made me chafe the more; "you can't make this a brave thing, and you can't help being forgiven. I don't intend to mention it to mother, nor to any living soul. I'm determined to forgive you. But I

do wonder that you should lift your hand against a person that you knew to be so umble!"

I felt only less mean than he. He knew me better than I knew myself. If he had retorted, or openly exasperated me, it would have been a relief and a justification; but he had put me on a slow fire, on which I lay tormented half the night.

In the morning, when I came out, the early church bell was ringing, and he was walking up and down with his mother. He addressed me as if nothing had happened, and I could do no less than reply. I had struck him hard enough to give him the toothache, I suppose. At all events his face was tied up in a black silk handkerchief, which, with his hat perched on the top of it, was far from improving his appearance. I heard that he went to a dentist's in London on the Monday morning, and had a tooth out. I hope it was a double one.

The Doctor gave out that he was not quite well; and remained alone, for a considerable part of every day, during the remainder of the visit. Agnes and her father had been gone a week, before we resumed our usual work. On the day preceding its resumption, the Doctor gave me with his own hands a folded note, not sealed. It was addressed to myself; and laid an injunction on me, in a few affectionate words, never to refer to the subject of that evening. I had confided it to my aunt, but to no one else. It was not a subject I could discuss with Agnes, and Agnes certainly had not the least suspicion of what had passed.

Neither, I felt convinced, had Mrs. Strong then. Several weeks elapsed before I saw the least change in her. It came on slowly, like a cloud when there is no wind. At first, she seemed to wonder at the gentle compassion with which the Doctor spoke to her, and at his wish that she should have her mother with her, to relieve the dull monotony of her life. Often, when we were at work, and she was sitting by, I would see her pausing and looking at him with that memorable face. Afterwards, I sometimes observed her rise, with her eyes full of tears, and go out of the room. Gradually, an unhappy shadow fell upon her beauty, and deepened every day. Mrs. Markleham was a regular inmate of the cottage then; but she talked and talked, and saw nothing.

As this change stole on Annie, once like sunshine in the

Doctor's house, the Doctor became older in appearance, and more grave; but the sweetness of his temper, the placid kindness of his manner, and his benevolent solicitude for her, if they were capable of any increase, were increased. I saw him once, early on the morning of her birthday, when she came to sit in the window while we were at work (which she had always done, but now began to do with a timid and uncertain air that I thought very touching), take her forehead between his hands, kiss it, and go hurriedly away, too much moved to remain. I saw her stand where he had left her, like a statue; and then bend down her head, and clasp her hands, and weep, I cannot say how sorrowfully.

Sometimes, after that, I fancied that she tried to speak even to me, in intervals when we were left alone. But she never uttered word. The Doctor always had some new project for her participating in amusements away from home, with her mother; and Mrs. Markleham, who was very fond of amusements, and very easily dissatisfied with anything else, entered into them with great good-will, and was loud in her commendations. But Annie, in a spiritless, unhappy way, only went whither she was led, and seemed to have no care for anything.

I did not know what to think. Neither did my aunt; who must have walked, at various times, a hundred miles in her uncertainty. What was strangest of all was, that the only real relief which seemed to make its way into the secret region of this domestic unhappiness, made its way there in the person of Mr. Dick.

What his thoughts were on the subject, or what his observation was, I am as unable to explain, as I dare say he would have been to assist me in the task. But, as I have recorded in the narrative of my schooldays, his veneration for the Doctor was unbounded; and there is a subtlety of perception in real attachment, even when it is borne towards man by one of the lower animals, which leaves the highest intellect behind. To this mind of the heart, if I may call it so, in Mr. Dick, some bright ray of the truth shot straight.

He had proudly resumed his privilege, in many of his spare hours, of walking up and down the garden with the Doctor; as he had been accustomed to pace up and down The Doctor's Walk at Canterbury. But matters were no sooner in this state, than he devoted all his spare time

(and got up earlier to make it more) to these perambulations. If he had never been so happy as when the Doctor read that marvellous performance, the Dictionary, to him; he was now quite miserable unless the Doctor pulled it out of his pocket, and began. When the Doctor and I were engaged, he now fell into the custom of walking up and down with Mrs. Strong, and helping her to trim her favourite flowers, or weed the beds. I dare say he rarely spoke a dozen words in an hour: but his quiet interest, and his wistful face, found immediate response in both their breasts; each knew that the other liked him, and that he loved both; and he became what no one else could be—a link between them.

When I think of him, with his impenetrably wise face, walking up and down with the Doctor, delighted to be battered by the hard words in the Dictionary; when I think of him carrying huge watering-pots after Annie; kneeling down, in very paws of gloves, at patient microscopic work among the little leaves; expressing as no philosopher could have expressed, in everything he did, a delicate desire to be her friend; showering sympathy, trustfulness, and affection, out of every hole in the watering-pot; when I think of him never wandering in that better mind of his to which unhappiness addressed itself, never bringing the unfortunate King Charles into the garden, never wavering in his grateful service, never diverted from his knowledge that there was something wrong, or from his wish to set it right—I really feel almost ashamed of having known that he was not quite in his wits, taking account of the utmost I have done with mine.

"Nobody but myself, Trot, knows what that man is!" my aunt would proudly remark, when we conversed about it. "Dick will distinguish himself yet!"

I must refer to one other topic before I close this chapter. While the visit at the Doctor's was still in progress, I observed that the postman brought two or three letters every morning for Uriah Heep, who remained at Highgate until the rest went back, it being a leisure time; and that these were always directed in a business-like manner by Mr. Micawber, who now assumed a round legal hand. I was glad to infer, from these slight premises, that Mr. Micawber was doing well; and consequently was much surprised to receive, about this time, the following letter from his amiable wife:—

"CANTERBURY, *Monday Evening.*

"You will doubtless be surprised, my dear Mr. Copperfield, to receive this communication. Still more so, by its contents. Still more so, by the stipulation of implicit confidence which I beg to impose. But my feelings as a wife and mother require relief; and as I do not wish to consult my family (already obnoxious to the feelings of Mr. Micawber), I know no one of whom I can better ask advice than my friend and former lodger.

"You may be aware, my dear Mr. Copperfield, that between myself and Mr. Micawber (whom I will never desert), there has always been preserved a spirit of mutual confidence. Mr. Micawber may have occasionally given a bill without consulting me, or he may have misled me as to the period when that obligation would become due. This has actually happened. But, in general, Mr. Micawber has had no secrets from the bosom of affection—I allude to his wife—and has invariably, on our retirement to rest, recalled the events of the day.

"You will picture to yourself, my dear Mr. Copperfield, what the poignancy of my feelings must be, when I inform you that Mr. Micawber is entirely changed. He is reserved. He is secret. His life is a mystery to the partner of his joys and sorrows—I again allude to his wife—and if I should assure you that beyond knowing that it is passed from morning to night at the office, I now know less of it than I do of the man in the south, connected with whose mouth the thoughtless children repeat an idle tale respecting cold plum porridge, I should adopt a popular fallacy to express an actual fact.

"But this is not all. Mr. Micawber is morose. He is severe. He is estranged from our eldest son and daughter, he has no pride in his twins, he looks with an eye of coldness even on the unoffending stranger who last become a member of our circle. The pecuniary means of meeting our expenses, kept down to the utmost farthing, are obtained from him with great difficulty, and even under fearful threats that he will Settle himself (the exact expression); and he inexorably refuses to give any explanation whatever of this distracting policy.

"This is hard to bear. This is heart-breaking. If you will advise me, knowing my feeble powers such as they are, how you think it will be best to exert them in a dilemma

so unwonted, you will add another friendly obligation to the many you have already rendered me. With loves from the children, and a smile from the happily-unconscious stranger, I remain, dear Mr. Copperfield,

"Your afflicted

"EMMA MICAWBER."

I did not feel justified in giving a wife of Mrs. Micawber's experience any other recommendation, than that she should try to reclaim Mr. Micawber by patience and kindness (as I knew she would in any case); but the letter set me thinking about him very much.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ANOTHER RETROSPECT.

ONCE again, let me pause upon a memorable period of my life. Let me stand aside, to see the phantoms of those days go by me, accompanying the shadow of myself, in dim procession.

Weeks, months, seasons, pass along. They seem little more than a summer day and a winter evening. Now, the Common where I walk with Dora is all in bloom, a field of bright gold; and now the unseen heather lies in mounds and bunches underneath a covering of snow. In a breath, the river that flows through our Sunday walks is sparkling in the summer sun, is ruffled by the winter wind, or thickened with drifting heaps of ice. Faster than ever river ran towards the sea, it flashes, darkens, and rolls away.

Not a thread changes, in the house of the two little bird-like ladies. The clock ticks over the fireplace, the weather-glass hangs in the hall. Neither clock nor weather-glass is ever right; but we believe in both, devoutly.

I have come legally to man's estate. I have attained the dignity of twenty-one. But this is a sort of dignity that may be thrust upon one. Let me think what I have achieved.

I have tamed that savage stenographic mystery. I make a respectable income by it. I am in high repute for my accomplishment in all pertaining to the art, and am joined

with eleven others in reporting the debates in Parliament for a Morning Newspaper. Night after night, I record predictions that never come to pass, professions that are never fulfilled, explanations that are only meant to mystify. I wallow in words. Britannia, that unfortunate female, is always before me, like a trussed fowl: skewered through and through with office-pens, and bound hand and foot with red tape. I am sufficiently behind the scenes to know the worth of political life. I am quite an Infidel about it, and shall never be converted.

My dear old Traddles has tried his hand at the same pursuit, but it is not in Traddles's way. He is perfectly good-humoured respecting his failure, and reminds me that he always did consider himself slow. He has occasional employment on the same newspaper, in getting up the facts of dry subjects, to be written about and embellished by more fertile minds. He is called to the Bar; and with admirable industry and self-denial has scraped another hundred pounds together, to fee a conveyancer whose chambers he attends. A great deal of very hot port wine was consumed at his call; and, considering the figure, I should think the Inner Temple must have made a profit by it.

I have come out in another way. I have taken with fear and trembling to authorship. I wrote a little something, in secret, and sent it to a magazine, and it was published in the magazine. Since then, I have taken heart to write a good many trifling pieces. Now, I am regularly paid for them. Altogether, I am well off; when I tell my income on the fingers of my left hand, I pass the third finger and take in the fourth to the middle joint.

We have removed from Buckingham Street, to a pleasant little cottage very near the one I looked at, when my enthusiasm first came on. My aunt, however (who has sold the house at Dover, to good advantage), is not going to remain here, but intends removing herself to a still more tiny cottage close at hand. What does this portend? My marriage? Yes!

Yes! I am going to be married to Dora! Miss Lavinia and Miss Clarissa have given their consent; and if ever canary-birds were in a flutter, they are. Miss Lavinia, self-charged with the superintendence of my darling's wardrobe, is constantly cutting out brown-paper cuirasses, and differing in opinion from a highly respectable young

man, with a long bundle, and a yard measure under his arm. A dressmaker, always stabbed in the breast with a needle and thread, boards and lodges in the house; and seems to me, eating, drinking, or sleeping, never to take her thimble off. They make a lay-figure of my dear. They are always sending for her to come and try something on. We can't be happy together for five minutes in the evening, but some intrusive female knocks at the door, and says, "Oh, if you please, Miss Dora, would you step up-stairs!"

Miss Clarissa and my aunt roam all over London, to find out articles of furniture for Dora and me to look at. It would be better for them to buy the goods at once, without this ceremony of inspection; for, when we go to see a kitchen fender and meat-screen, Dora sees a Chinese house for Jip, with little bells on the top, and prefers that. And it takes a long time to accustom Jip to his new residence, after we have bought it; whenever he goes in or out, he makes all the little bells ring, and is horribly frightened.

Peggotty comes up to make herself useful, and falls to work immediately. Her department appears to be, to clean everything over and over again. She rubs everything that can be rubbed, until it shines, like her own honest forehead, with perpetual friction. And now it is, that I begin to see her solitary brother passing through the dark streets at night, and looking, as he goes, among the wandering faces. I never speak to him at such an hour. I know too well, as his grave figure passes onward, what he seeks, and what he dreads.

Why does Traddles look so important when he calls upon me this afternoon in the Commons—where I still occasionally attend, for form's sake, when I have time? The realisation of my boyish day-dreams is at hand. I am going to take out the licence.

It is a little document to do so much; and Traddles contemplates it, as it lies upon my desk, half in admiration, half in awe. There are the names in the sweet old visionary connexion, David Copperfield and Dora Spenlow; and there, in the corner, is that Parental Institution, the Stamp Office, which is so benignantly interested in the various transactions of human life, looking down upon our Union; and there is the Archbishop of Canterbury invoking a blessing on us in print, and doing it as cheap as could possibly be expected.

Nevertheless, I am in a dream, a flustered, happy, hurried dream. I can't believe that it is going to be; and yet I can't believe but that every one I pass in the street, must have some kind of perception, that I am to be married the day after to-morrow. The Surrogate knows me, when I go down to be sworn; and disposes of me easily, as if there were a Masonic understanding between us. Traddles is not at all wanted, but is in attendance as my general backer.

"I hope the next time you come here, my dear fellow," I say to Traddles, "it will be on the same errand for yourself. And I hope it will be soon."

"Thank you for your good wishes, my dear Copperfield," he replies. "I hope so too. It's a satisfaction to know that she'll wait for me any length of time, and that she really is the dearest girl——"

"When are you to meet her at the coach?" I ask.

"At seven," says Traddles, looking at his plain old silver watch—the very watch he once took a wheel out of, at school, to make a water-mill. "That is about Miss Wickfield's time, is it not?"

"A little earlier. Her time is half-past eight."

"I assure you, my dear boy," says Traddles, "I am almost as pleased as if I were going to be married myself, to think that this event is coming to such a happy termination. And really the great friendship and consideration of personally associating Sophy with the joyful occasion, and inviting her to be a bridesmaid in conjunction with Miss Wickfield, demands my warmest thanks. I am extremely sensible of it."

I hear him, and shake hands with him; and we talk, and walk, and dine, and so on; but I don't believe it. Nothing is real.

Sophy arrives at the house of Dora's aunts, in due course. She has the most agreeable of faces,—not absolutely beautiful, but extraordinarily pleasant,—and is one of the most genial, unaffected, frank, engaging creatures I have ever seen. Traddles presents her to us with great pride; and rubs his hands for ten minutes by the clock, with every individual hair upon his head standing on tiptoe, when I congratulate him in a corner on his choice.

I have brought Agnes from the Canterbury coach, and her cheerful and beautiful face is among us for the second

time. Agnes has a great liking for Traddles, and it is capital to see them meet, and to observe the glory of Traddles as he commends the dearest girl in the world to her acquaintance.

Still I don't believe it. We have a delightful evening, and are supremely happy; but I don't believe it yet. I can't collect myself. I can't check off my happiness as it takes place. I feel in a misty and unsettled kind of state; as if I had got up very early in the morning a week or two ago, and had never been to bed since. I can't make out when yesterday was. I seem to have been carrying the licence about, in my pocket, many months.

Next day, too, when we all go in a flock to see the house —our house—Dora's and mine—I am quite unable to regard myself as its master. I seem to be there, by permission of somebody else. I half expect the real master to come home presently, and say he is glad to see me. Such a beautiful little house as it is, with everything so bright and new; with the flowers on the carpets looking as if freshly gathered, and the green leaves on the paper as if they had just come out; with the spotless muslin curtains, and the blushing rose-coloured furniture, and Dora's garden hat with the blue ribbon—do I remember, now, how I loved her in such another hat when I first knew her!—already hanging on its little peg; the guitar-case quite at home on its heels in a corner; and everybody tumbling over Jip's pagoda, which is much too big for the establishment.

Another happy evening, quite as unreal as all the rest of it, and I steal into the usual room before going away. Dora is not there. I suppose they have not done trying on yet. Miss Lavinia peeps in, and tells me mysteriously that she will not be long. She is rather long, notwithstanding; but by-and-by I hear a rustling at the door, and some one taps.

I say, "Come in!" but some one taps again.

I go to the door, wondering who it is; there, I meet a pair of bright eyes, and a blushing face; they are Dora's eyes and face, and Miss Lavinia has dressed her in to-morrow's dress, bonnet and all, for me to see. I take my little wife to my heart; and Miss Lavinia gives a little scream because I tumble the bonnet, and Dora laughs and cries at once, because I am so pleased: and I believe it less than ever.

"Do you think it pretty, Doady?" says Dora.

Pretty! I should rather think I did.

"And are you sure you like me very much?" says Dora.

The topic is fraught with such danger to the bonnet, that Miss Lavinia gives another little scream, and begs me to understand that Dora is only to be looked at, and on no account to be touched. So Dora stands in a delightful state of confusion for a minute or two, to be admired; and then takes off her bonnet—looking so natural without it!—and runs away with it in her hand; and comes dancing down again in her own familiar dress, and asks Jip if I have got a beautiful little wife, and whether he'll forgive her for being married, and kneels down to make him stand upon the Cookery Book, for the last time in her single life.

I go home, more incredulous than ever, to a lodging that I have hard by; and get up very early in the morning, to ride to the Highgate road and fetch my aunt.

I have never seen my aunt in such state. She is dressed in lavender-coloured silk, and has a white bonnet on, and is amazing. Janet has dressed her, and is there to look at me. Peggotty is ready to go to church, intending to behold the ceremony from the gallery. Mr. Dick, who is to give my darling to me at the altar, has had his hair curled. Traddles, whom I have taken up by appointment at the turnpike, presents a dazzling combination of cream colour and light blue; and both he and Mr. Dick have a general effect about them of being all gloves.

No doubt I see this, because I know it is so; but I am astray, and seem to see nothing. Nor do I believe anything whatever. Still, as we drive along in an open carriage, this fairy marriage is real enough to fill me with a sort of wondering pity for the unfortunate people who have no part in it, but are sweeping out the shops, and going to their daily occupations.

My aunt sits with my hand in hers all the way. When we stop a little way short of the church, to put down Peggotty, whom we have brought on the box, she gives it a squeeze, and me a kiss.

"God bless you, Trot! My own boy never could be dearer. I think of poor dear Baby this morning."

"So do I. And of all I owe to you, dear aunt."

"Tut, child!" says my aunt; and gives her hand in overflowing cordiality to Traddles, who then gives his to

Mr. Dick, who then gives his to me, who then give mine to Traddles, and then we come to the church door.

The church is calm enough, I am sure; but it might be a steam-power loom in full action, for any sedative effect it has on me. I am too far gone for that.

The rest is all a more or less incoherent dream.

A dream of their coming in with Dora; of the pew-opener arranging us, like a drill-serjeant, before the altar rails; of my wondering, even then, why pew-openers must always be the most disagreeable females procurable, and whether there is any religious dread of a disastrous infection of good-humour which renders it indispensable to set those vessels of vinegar upon the road to Heaven.

Of the clergyman and clerk appearing; of a few boatmen and some other people strolling in; of an ancient mariner behind me, strongly flavouring the church with rum; of the service beginning in a deep voice, and our all being very attentive.

Of Miss Lavinia, who acts as a semi-auxiliary bridesmaid, being the first to cry, and of her doing homage (as I take it) to the memory of Pidger, in sobs; of Miss Clarissa applying a smelling-bottle; of Agnes taking care of Dora; of my aunt endeavouring to represent herself as a model of sternness, with tears rolling down her face; of little Dora trembling very much, and making her responses in faint whispers.

Of our kneeling down together, side by side; of Dora's trembling less and less, but always clasping Agnes by the hand; of the service being got through, quietly and gravely; of our all looking at each other in an April state of smiles and tears, when it is over; of my young wife being hysterical in the vestry, and crying for her poor papa, her dear papa.

Of her soon cheering up again, and our signing the register all round. Of my going into the gallery for Peggotty to bring *her* to sign it; of Peggotty's hugging me in a corner, and telling me she saw my own dear mother married; of its being over, and our going away.

Of my walking so proudly and lovingly down the aisle with my sweet wife upon my arm, through a mist of half-seen people, pulpits, monuments, pews, fonts, organs, and church-windows, in which there flutter faint airs of association with my childish church at home, so long ago.

Of their whispering, as we pass, what a youthful couple we are, and what a pretty little wife she is. Of our all being so merry and talkative in the carriage going back. Of Sophy telling us that when she saw Traddles (whom I had entrusted with the licence) asked for it, she almost fainted, having been convinced that he would contrive to lose it, or to have his pocket picked. Of Agnes laughing gaily; and of Dora being so fond of Agnes that she will not be separated from her, but still keeps her hand.

Of there being a breakfast, with abundance of things, pretty and substantial, to eat and drink, whereof I partake, as I should do in any other dream, without the least perception of their flavour; eating and drinking, as I may say, nothing but love and marriage, and no more believing in the viands than in anything else.

Of my making a speech in the same dreamy fashion, without having an idea of what I want to say, beyond such as may be comprehended in the full conviction that I haven't said it. Of our being very sociably and simply happy (always in a dream though); and of Jip's having wedding cake, and its not agreeing with him afterwards.

Of the pair of hired post-horses being ready, and of Dora's going away to change her dress. Of my aunt and Miss Clarissa remaining with us; and our walking in the garden; and my aunt, who has made quite a speech at breakfast touching Dora's aunts, being mightily amused with herself, but a little proud of it too.

Of Dora's being ready, and of Miss Lavinia's hovering about her, loth to lose the pretty toy that has given her so much pleasant occupation. Of Dora's making a long series of surprised discoveries that she has forgotten all sorts of little things; and of everybody's running everywhere to fetch them.

Of their all closing about Dora, when at last she begins to say good-bye, looking, with their bright colours and ribbons, like a bed of flowers. Of my darling being almost smothered among the flowers, and coming out, laughing and crying both together, to my jealous arms.

Of my wanting to carry Jip (who is to go along with us), and Dora's saying No, that she must carry him, or else he'll think she don't like him any more, now she is married, and will break his heart. Of our going, arm in arm, and Dora stopping and looking back, and saying, "If I have ever

been cross or ungrateful to anybody, don't remember it!" and bursting into tears.

Of her waving her little hand, and our going away once more. Of her once more stopping and looking back, and hurrying to Agnes, and giving Agnes, above all the others, her last kisses and farewells.

We drive away together, and I awake from the dream. I believe it at last. It is my dear, dear, little wife beside me, whom I love so well!

"Are you happy now, you foolish boy?" says Dora, "and sure you don't repent?"

I have stood aside to see the phantoms of those days go by me. They are gone, and I resume the journey of my story.

CHAPTER XLIV.

OUR HOUSEKEEPING.

It was a strange condition of things, the honeymoon being over, and the bridesmaids gone home, when I found myself sitting down in my own small house with Dora; quite thrown out of employment, as I may say, in respect of the delicious old occupation of making love.

It seemed such an extraordinary thing to have Dora always there. It was so unaccountable not to be obliged to go out to see her, not to have any occasion to be tormenting myself about her, not to have to write to her, not to be scheming and devising opportunities of being alone with her. Sometimes of an evening, when I looked up from my writing, and saw her seated opposite, I would lean back in my chair, and think how queer it was that there we were, alone together as a matter of course—nobody's business any more—all the romance of our engagement put away upon a shelf, to rust—no one to please but one another—one another to please, for life.

When there was a debate, and I was kept out very late, it seemed so strange to me, as I was walking home, to think that Dora was at home! It was such a wonderful thing, at first, to have her coming softly down to talk to me as I ate

my supper. It was such a stupendous thing to know for certain that she put her hair in papers. It was altogether such an astonishing event to see her do it!

I doubt whether two young birds could have known less about keeping house, than I and my pretty Dora did. We had a servant, of course. She kept house for us. I have still a latent belief that she must have been Mrs. Crupp's daughter in disguise, we had such an awful time of it with Mary Anne.

Her name was Paragon. Her nature was represented to us, when we engaged her, as being feebly expressed in her name. She had a written character, as large as a Proclamation; and, according to this document, could do everything of a domestic nature that ever I heard of, and a great many things that I never did hear of. She was a woman in the prime of life; of a severe countenance; and subject (particularly in the arms) to a sort of perpetual measles or fiery rash. She had a cousin in the Life Guards, with such long legs that he looked like the afternoon shadow of somebody else. His shell-jacket was as much too little for him as he was too big for the premises. He made the cottage smaller than it need have been, by being so very much out of proportion to it. Besides which, the walls were not thick, and whenever he passed the evening at our house, we always knew of it by hearing one continual growl in the kitchen.

Our treasure was warranted sober and honest. I am therefore willing to believe that she was in a fit when we found her under the boiler; and that the deficient teaspoons were attributable to the dustman.

But she preyed upon our minds dreadfully. We felt our inexperience, and were unable to help ourselves. We should have been at her mercy, if she had had any; but she was a remorseless woman, and had none. She was the cause of our first little quarrel.

"My dearest life," I said one day to Dora, "do you think Mary Anne has any idea of time?"

"Why, Doady?" inquired Dora, looking up, innocently, from her drawing.

"My love, because it's five, and we were to have dined at four."

Dora glanced wistfully at the clock, and hinted that she thought it was too fast.

"On the contrary, my love," said I, referring to my watch, "it's a few minutes too slow."

My little wife came and sat upon my knee, to coax me to be quiet, and drew a line with her pencil down the middle of my nose; but I couldn't dine off that, though it was very agreeable.

"Don't you think, my dear," said I, "it would be better for you to remonstrate with Mary Anne?"

"Oh no, please! I couldn't, Doady!" said Dora.

"Why not, my love?" I gently asked.

"Oh, because I am such a little goose," said Dora, "and she knows I am!"

I thought this sentiment so incompatible with the establishment of any system of check on Mary Anne, that I frowned a little.

"Oh, what ugly wrinkles in my bad boy's forehead!" said Dora, and still being on my knee, she traced them with her pencil; putting it to her rosy lips to make it mark blacker, and working at my forehead with a quaint little mockery of being industrious, that quite delighted me in spite of myself.

"There's a good child," said Dora, "it makes its face so much prettier to laugh."

"But, my love," said I.

"No, no! please!" cried Dora, with a kiss, "don't be a naughty Blue Beard! Don't be serious!"

"My precious wife," said I, "we must be serious sometimes. Come! Sit down on this chair, close beside me! Give me the pencil! There! Now let us talk sensibly. You know, dear;" what a little hand it was to hold, and what a tiny wedding-ring it was to see! "You know, my love, it is not exactly comfortable to have to go out without one's dinner. Now, is it?"

"N—n—no!" replied Dora, faintly.

"My love, how you tremble!"

"Because I KNOW you're going to scold me," exclaimed Dora, in a piteous voice.

"My sweet, I am only going to reason."

"Oh, but reasoning is worse than scolding!" exclaimed Dora, in despair. "I didn't marry to be reasoned with. If you meant to reason with such a poor little thing as I am, you ought to have told me so, you cruel boy!"

I tried to pacify Dora, but she turned away her face, and

shook her curls from side to side, and said "You cruel, cruel boy!" so many times, that I really did not exactly know what to do: so I took a few turns up and down the room in my uncertainty, and came back again.

"Dora, my darling!"

"No, I am not your darling. Because you *must* be sorry that you married me, or else you wouldn't reason with me!" returned Dora.

I felt so injured by the inconsequential nature of this charge, that it gave me courage to be grave.

"Now, my own Dora," said I, "you are very childish, and are talking nonsense. You must remember, I am sure, that I was obliged to go out yesterday when dinner was half over; and that, the day before, I was made quite unwell by being obliged to eat underdone veal in a hurry; to-day, I don't dine at all—and I am afraid to say how long we waited for breakfast—and *then* the water didn't boil. I don't mean to reproach you, my dear, but this is not comfortable."

"Oh, you cruel, cruel boy, to say I am a disagreeable wife!" cried Dora.

"Now, my dear Dora, you must know that I never said that!"

"You said I wasn't comfortable!" said Dora.

"I said the housekeeping was not comfortable."

"It's exactly the same thing!" cried Dora. And she evidently thought so, for she wept most grievously.

I took another turn across the room, full of love for my pretty wife, and distracted by self-accusatory inclinations to knock my head against the door. I sat down again, and said:

"I am not blaming you, Dora. We have both a great deal to learn. I am only trying to show you, my dear, that you must—you really must" (I was resolved not to give this up) "accustom yourself to look after Mary Anne. Likewise to act a little for yourself, and me."

"I wonder, I do, at your making such ungrateful speeches," sobbed Dora. "When you know that the other day, when you said you would like a little bit of fish, I went out myself, miles and miles, and ordered it, to surprise you."

"And it was very kind of you, my own darling," said I. "I felt it so much that I wouldn't on any account have even

mentioned that you bought a Salmon—which was too much for two. Or that it cost one pound six—which was more than we can afford."

"You enjoyed it very much," sobbed Dora. "And you said I was a Mouse."

"And I'll say so again, my love," I returned, "a thousand times!"

But I had wounded Dora's soft little heart, and she was not to be comforted. She was so pathetic in her sobbing and bewailing, that I felt as if I had said I don't know what to hurt her. I was obliged to hurry away; I was kept out late; and I felt all night such pangs of remorse as made me miserable. I had the conscience of an assassin, and was haunted by a vague sense of enormous wickedness.

It was two or three hours past midnight when I got home. I found my aunt, in our house, sitting up for me.

"Is anything the matter, aunt?" said I, alarmed.

"Nothing, Trot," she replied. "Sit down, sit down. Little Blossom has been rather out of spirits, and I have been keeping her company. That's all."

I leaned my head upon my hand; and felt more sorry and downcast, as I sat looking at the fire, than I could have supposed possible so soon after the fulfilment of my brightest hopes. As I sat thinking, I happened to meet my aunt's eyes, which were resting on my face. There was an anxious expression in them, but it cleared directly.

"I assure you, aunt," said I, "I have been quite unhappy myself all night, to think of Dora's being so. But I had no other intention than to speak to her tenderly and lovingly about our home-affairs."

My aunt nodded encouragement.

"You must have patience, Trot," said she.

"Of course. Heaven knows I don't mean to be unreasonable, aunt!"

"No, no," said my aunt. "But Little Blossom is a very tender little blossom, and the wind must be gentle with her."

I thanked my good aunt, in my heart, for her tenderness towards my wife; and I was sure that she knew I did.

"Don't you think, aunt," said I, after some further contemplation of the fire, "that you could advise and counsel Dora a little, for our mutual advantage, now and then?"

"Trot," returned my aunt, with some emotion, "no! Don't ask me such a thing!"

Her tone was so very earnest that I raised my eyes in surprise.

"I look back on my life, child," said my aunt, "and I think of some who are in their graves, with whom I might have been on kinder terms. If I judged harshly of other people's mistakes in marriage, it may have been because I had bitter reason to judge harshly of my own. Let that pass. I have been a grumpy, frumpy, wayward sort of a woman, a good many years. I am still, and I always shall be. But you and I have done one another some good, Trot—at all events, you have done me good, my dear; and division must not come between us, at this time of day."

"Division between *us!*" cried I.

"Child, child!" said my aunt, smoothing her dress, "how soon it might come between us, or how unhappy I might make our Little Blossom, if I meddled in anything, a prophet couldn't say. I want our pet to like me, and be as gay as a butterfly. Remember your own home, in that second marriage; and never do both me and her the injury you have hinted at!"

I comprehended, at once, that my aunt was right; and I comprehended the full extent of her generous feeling towards my dear wife.

"These are early days, Trot," she pursued, "and Rome was not built in a day, nor in a year. You have chosen freely for yourself;" a cloud passed over her face for a moment, I thought; "and you have chosen a very pretty and a very affectionate creature. It will be your duty, and it will be your pleasure too—of course I know that; I am not delivering a lecture—to estimate her (as you chose her) by the qualities she has, and not by the qualities she may not have. The latter you must develop in her, if you can. And if you cannot, child," here my aunt rubbed her nose, "you must just accustom yourself to do without 'em. But remember, my dear, your future is between you two. No one can assist you; you are to work it out for yourselves. This is marriage, Trot; and Heaven bless you both, in it, for a pair of babes in the wood as you are!"

My aunt said this in a sprightly way, and gave me a kiss to ratify the blessing.

"Now," said she, "light my little lantern, and see me into my band-box by the garden path;" for there was a communication between our cottages in that direction. "Give Betsey Trotwood's love to Blossom, when you come back; and whatever you do, Trot, never dream of setting Betsey up as a scarecrow, for if *I* ever saw her in the glass, she's quite grim enough and gaunt enough in her private capacity!"

With this my aunt tied her head up in a handkerchief, with which she was accustomed to make a bundle of it on such occasions; and I escorted her home. As she stood in her garden, holding up her little lantern to light me back, I thought her observation of me had an anxious air again; but I was too much occupied in pondering on what she had said, and too much impressed—for the first time, in reality—by the conviction that Dora and I had indeed to work out our future for ourselves, and that no one could assist us, to take much notice of it.

Dora came stealing down in her little slippers, to meet me, now that I was alone; and cried upon my shoulder, and said I had been hard-hearted and she had been naughty; and I said much the same thing in effect, I believe; and we made it up, and agreed that our first little difference was to be our last, and that we were never to have another if we lived a hundred years.

The next domestic trial we went through, was the Ordeal of Servants. Mary Anne's cousin deserted into our coal-hole, and was brought out, to our great amazement, by a piquet of his companions in arms, who took him away handcuffed in a procession that covered our front-garden with ignominy. This nerved me to get rid of Mary Anne, who went so mildly, on receipt of wages, that I was surprised, until I found out about the teaspoons, and also about the little sums she had borrowed in my name of the tradespeople without authority. After an interval of Mrs. Kidgerbury—the oldest inhabitant of Kentish Town, I believe, who went out charing, but was too feeble to execute her conceptions of that art—we found another treasure, who was one of the most amiable of women, but who generally made a point of falling either up or down the kitchen stairs with the tray, and almost always plunged into the parlour, as into a bath, with the tea-things. The ravages committed by this unfortunate rendering her dismissal necessary, she

was succeeded (with intervals of Mrs. Kidgerbury) by a long line of Incapables; terminating in a young person of genteel appearance, who went to Greenwich Fair in Dora's bonnet. After whom I remember nothing but an average equality of failure.

Everybody we had anything to do with seemed to cheat us. Our appearance in a shop was a signal for the damaged goods to be brought out immediately. If we bought a lobster, it was full of water. All our meat turned out to be tough, and there was hardly any crust to our loaves. In search of the principle on which joints ought to be roasted, to be roasted enough, and not too much, I myself referred to the Cookery Book, and found it there established as the allowance of a quarter of an hour to every pound, and say a quarter over. But the principle always failed us by some curious fatality, and we never could hit any medium between redness and cinders.

I had reason to believe that in accomplishing these failures we incurred a far greater expense than if we had achieved a series of triumphs. It appeared to me, on looking over the tradesmen's books, as if we might have kept the basement story paved with butter, such was the extensive scale of our consumption of that article. I don't know whether the Excise returns of the period may have exhibited any increase in the demand for pepper; but if our performances did not affect the market, I should say several families must have left off using it. And the most wonderful fact of all was, that we never had anything in the house.

As to the washerwoman pawning the clothes, and coming in a state of penitent intoxication to apologise, I suppose that might have happened several times to anybody. Also the chimney on fire, the parish engine, and perjury on the part of the Beadle. But I apprehend that we were personally unfortunate in engaging a servant with a taste for cordials, who swelled our running account for porter at the public-house by such inexplicable items as "quartern rum shrub (Mrs. C.);" "Half-quartern gin and cloves (Mrs. C.);" "Glass rum and peppermint (Mrs. C.)"—the parentheses always referring to Dora, who was supposed, it appeared on explanation, to have imbibed the whole of these refreshments.

One of our first feats in the housekeeping way was a little

dinner to Traddles. I met him in town, and asked him to walk out with me that afternoon. He readily consenting, I wrote to Dora, saying I would bring him home. It was pleasant weather, and on the road we made my domestic happiness the theme of conversation. Traddles was very full of it; and said, that, picturing himself with such a home, and Sophy waiting and preparing for him, he could think of nothing wanting to complete his bliss.

I could not have wished for a prettier little wife at the opposite end of the table, but I certainly could have wished, when we sate down, for a little more room. I did not know how it was, but though there were only two of us, we were at once always cramped for room, and yet had always room enough to lose everything in. I suspect it may have been because nothing had a place of its own, except Jip's pagoda, which invariably blocked up the main thoroughfare. On the present occasion, Traddles was so hemmed in by the pagoda and the guitar-case, and Dora's flower-painting, and my writing-table, that I had serious doubts of the possibility of his using his knife and fork; but he protested, with his own good-humour, "Oceans of room, Copperfield! I assure you, Oceans."

There was another thing I could have wished, namely, that Jip had never been encouraged to walk about the table-cloth during dinner. I began to think there was something disorderly in his being there at all, even if he had not been in the habit of putting his foot in the salt or the melted butter. On this occasion he seemed to think he was introduced expressly to keep Traddles at bay; and he barked at my old friend, and made short runs at his plate, with such undaunted pertinacity, that he may be said to have engrossed the conversation.

However, as I knew how tender-hearted my dear Dora was, and how sensitive she would be to any slight upon her favourite, I hinted no objection. For similar reasons I made no allusion to the skirmishing plates upon the floor; or to the disreputable appearance of the castors, which were all at sixes and sevens, and looked drunk; or to the further blockade of Traddles by wandering vegetable-dishes and jugs. I could not help wondering in my own mind, as I contemplated the boiled leg of mutton before me, previous to carving it, how it came to pass that our joints of meat were of such extraordinary shapes—and whether our butcher

contracted for all the deformed sheep that came into the world; but I kept my reflections to myself.

"My love," said I to Dora, "what have you got in that dish?"

I could not imagine why Dora had been making tempting little faces at me, as if she wanted to kiss me.

"Oysters, dear," said Dora, timidly.

"Was that *your* thought?" said I, delighted.

"Ye-yes, Doady," said Dora.

"There never was a happier one!" I exclaimed, laying down the carving-knife and fork. "There is nothing Traddles likes so much!"

"Ye-yes, Doady," said Dora, "and so I bought a beautiful little barrel of them, and the man said they were very good. But I—I am afraid there's something the matter with them. They don't seem right." Here Dora shook her head, and diamonds twinkled in her eyes.

"They are only opened in both shells," said I. "Take the top one off, my love."

"But it won't come off," said Dora, trying very hard, and looking very much distressed.

"Do you know, Copperfield," said Traddles, cheerfully examining the dish, "I think it is in consequence—they are capital oysters, but I *think* it is in consequence—of their never having been opened."

They never had been opened; and we had no oyster-knives—and couldn't have used them if we had; so we looked at the oysters and ate the mutton. At least we ate as much of it as was done, and made up with capers. If I had permitted him, I am satisfied that Traddles would have made a perfect savage of himself, and eaten a plateful of raw meat, to express enjoyment of the repast; but I would hear of no such immolation on the altar of friendship; and we had a course of bacon instead; there happening, by good fortune, to be cold bacon in the larder.

My poor little wife was in such affliction when she thought I should be annoyed, and in such a state of joy when she found I was not, that the discomfiture I had subdued very soon vanished, and we passed a happy evening; Dora sitting with her arm on my chair while Traddles and I discussed a glass of wine, and taking every opportunity of whispering in my ear that it was so good of me not to be a cruel, cross old boy. By-and-by she made tea for us; which it was so

pretty to see her do, as if she was busying herself with a set of doll's tea-things, that I was not particular about the quality of the beverage. Then Traddles and I played a game or two at cribbage; and Dora singing to the guitar the while, it seemed to me as if our courtship and marriage were a tender dream of mine, and the night when I first listened to her voice were not yet over.

When Traddles went away, and I came back into the parlour from seeing him out, my wife planted her chair close to mine, and sat down by my side.

"I am very sorry," she said. "Will you try to teach me, Doady?"

"I must teach myself first, Dora," said I. "I am as bad as you, love."

"Ah! But you can learn," she returned; "and you are a clever, clever man!"

"Nonsense, Mouse!" said I.

"I wish," resumed my wife, after a long silence, "that I could have gone down into the country for a whole year, and lived with Agnes!"

Her hands were clasped upon my shoulder, and her chin rested on them, and her blue eyes looked quietly into mine.

"Why so?" I asked.

"I think she might have improved me, and I think I might have learned from *her*," said Dora.

"All in good time, my love. Agnes has had her father to take care of for these many years, you should remember. Even when she was quite a child, she was the Agnes whom we know," said I.

"Will you call me a name I want you to call me?" inquired Dora, without moving.

"What is it?" I asked with a smile.

"It's a stupid name," she said, shaking her curls for a moment. "Child-wife."

I laughingly asked my child-wife what her fancy was in desiring to be so called. She answered without moving, otherwise than as the arm I twined about her may have brought her blue eyes nearer to me:

"I don't mean, you silly fellow, that you should use the name instead of Dora. I only mean that you should think of me that way. When you are going to be angry with me, say to yourself, 'it's only my child-wife!' When I am very disappointing, say, 'I knew, a long time ago, that

she would make but a child-wife!' When you miss what I should like to be, and I think can never be, say, 'still my foolish child-wife loves me!' For indeed I do."

I had not been serious with her; having no idea, until now, that she was serious herself. But her affectionate nature was so happy in what I now said to her with my whole heart, that her face became a laughing one before her glittering eyes were dry. She was soon my child-wife indeed; sitting down on the floor outside the Chinese house, ringing all the little bells one after another, to punish Jip for his recent bad behaviour; while Jip lay blinking in the doorway with his head out, even too lazy to be teased.

This appeal of Dora's made a strong impression on me. I look back on the time I write of; I invoke the innocent figure that I dearly loved, to come out from the mists and shadows of the past, and turn its gentle head towards me once again; and I can still declare that this one little speech was constantly in my memory. I may not have used it to the best account; I was young and inexperienced; but I never turned a deaf ear to its artless pleading.

Dora told me, shortly afterwards, that she was going to be a wonderful housekeeper. Accordingly, she polished the tablets, pointed the pencil, bought an immense account-book, carefully stitched up with a needle and thread all the leaves of the Cookery Book which Jip had torn, and made quite a desperate little attempt "to be good," as she called it. But the figures had the old obstinate propensity —they *would not* add up. When she had entered two or three laborious items in the account-book, Jip would walk over the page, wagging his tail, and smear them all out. Her own little right-hand middle finger got steeped to the very bone in ink; and I think that was the only decided result attained.

Sometimes, of an evening, when I was at home and at work—for I wrote a good deal now, and was beginning in a small way to be known as a writer—I would lay down my pen, and watch my child-wife trying to be good. First of all, she would bring out the immense account-book, and lay it down upon the table, with a deep sigh. Then she would open it at the place where Jip had made it illegible last night, and call Jip up, to look at his misdeeds. This would occasion a diversion in Jip's favour, and some inking of his nose, perhaps, as a penalty. Then she would tell

Jip to lie down on the table instantly, "like a lion"—which was one of his tricks, though I cannot say the likeness was striking—and, if he were in an obedient humour, he would obey. Then she would take up a pen, and begin to write, and find a hair in it. Then she would take up another pen, and begin to write, and find that it spluttered. Then she would take up another pen, and begin to write, and say in a low voice, "Oh, it's a talking pen, and will disturb Doady!" And then she would give it up as a bad job, and put the account-book away, after pretending to crush the lion with it.

Or, if she were in a very sedate and serious state of mind, she would sit down with the tablets, and a little basket of bills, and other documents, which looked more like curl-papers than anything else, and endeavour to get some result out of them. After severely comparing one with another, and making entries on the tablets, and blotting them out, and counting all the fingers of her left hand over and over again, backwards and forwards, she would be so vexed and discouraged, and would look so unhappy, that it gave me pain to see her bright face clouded—and for me!—and I would go softly to her, and say:

"What's the matter, Dora?"

Dora would look up hopelessly, and reply, "They won't come right. They make my head ache so. And they won't do anything I want!"

Then I would say, "Now let us try together. Let me show you, Dora."

Then I would commence a practical demonstration, to which Dora would pay profound attention, perhaps for five minutes; when she would begin to be dreadfully tired, and would lighten the subject by curling my hair, or trying the effect of my face with my shirt-collar turned down. If I tacitly checked this playfulness, and persisted, she would look so scared and disconsolate, as she became more and more bewildered, that the remembrance of her natural gaiety when I first strayed into her path, and of her being my child-wife, would come reproachfully upon me; and I would lay the pencil down, and call for the guitar.

I had a great deal of work to do, and had many anxieties, but the same considerations made me keep them to myself. I am far from sure, now, that it was right to do this, but I did it for my child-wife's sake. I search my breast, and I

commit its secrets, if I know them, without any reservation to this paper. The old unhappy loss or want of something had, I am conscious, some place in my heart; but not to the embitterment of my life. When I walked alone in the fine weather, and thought of the summer days when all the air had been filled with my boyish enchantment, I did miss something of the realisation of my dreams; but I thought it was a softened glory of the Past, which nothing could have thrown upon the present time. I did feel, sometimes, for a little while, that I could have wished my wife had been my counsellor; had had more character and purpose, to sustain me, and improve me by; had been endowed with power to fill up the void which somewhere seemed to be about me; but I felt as if this were an unearthly consummation of my happiness, that never had been meant to be, and never could have been.

I was a boyish husband as to years. I had known the softening influence of no other sorrows or experiences than those recorded in these leaves. If I did any wrong, as I may have done much, I did it in mistaken love, and in my want of wisdom. I write the exact truth. It would avail me nothing to extenuate it now.

Thus it was that I took upon myself the toils and cares of our life, and had no partner in them. We lived much as before, in reference to our scrambling household arrangements; but I had got used to those, and Dora I was pleased to see was seldom vexed now. She was bright and cheerful in the old childish way, loved me dearly, and was happy with her old trifles.

When the debates were heavy—I mean as to length, not quality, for in the last respect they were not often otherwise—and I went home late, Dora would never rest when she heard my footsteps, but would always come down stairs to meet me. When my evenings were unoccupied by the pursuit for which I had qualified myself with so much pains, and I was engaged in writing at home, she would sit quietly near me, however late the hour, and be so mute, that I would often think she had dropped asleep. But generally, when I raised my head, I saw her blue eyes looking at me with the quiet attention of which I have already spoken.

"Oh, what a weary boy!" said Dora one night, when I met her eyes as I was shutting up my desk.

"What a weary girl!" said I. "That's more to the pur-

pose. You must go to bed another time, my love. It's far too late for you."

"No, don't send me to bed!" pleaded Dora, coming to my side. "Pray don't do that!"

"Dora!"

To my amazement she was sobbing on my neck.

"Not well, my dear? not happy?"

"Yes! quite well, and very happy!" said Dora. "But say you'll let me stop, and see you write."

"Why, what a sight for such bright eyes at midnight!" I replied.

"Are they bright, though?" returned Dora, laughing. "I'm so glad they're bright."

"Little Vanity!" said I.

But it was not vanity; it was only harmless delight in my admiration. I knew that very well, before she told me so.

"If you think them pretty, say I may always stop, and see you write!" said Dora. "*Do* you think them pretty?"

"Very pretty."

"Then let me always stop and see you write."

"I am afraid that won't improve their brightness, Dora."

"Yes, it will! Because, you clever boy, you'll not forget me then, while you are full of silent fancies. Will you mind it, if I say something very, very silly?—more than usual?" inquired Dora, peeping over my shoulder into my face.

"What wonderful thing is that?" said I.

"Please let me hold the pens," said Dora. "I want to have something to do with all those many hours when you are so industrious. May I hold the pens?"

The remembrance of her pretty joy when I said Yes, brings tears into my eyes. The next time I sat down to write, and regularly afterwards, she sat in her old place, with a spare bundle of pens at her side. Her triumph in this connexion with my work, and her delight when I wanted a new pen—which I very often feigned to do—suggested to me a new way of pleasing my child-wife. I occasionally made a pretence of wanting a page or two of manuscript copied. Then Dora was in her glory. The preparations she made for this great work, the aprons she put on, the bibs she borrowed from the kitchen to keep off the ink, the time she took, the innumerable stoppages she

made to have a laugh with Jip as if he understood it all, her conviction that her work was incomplete unless she signed her name at the end, and the way in which she would bring it to me, like a school-copy, and then, when I praised it, clasp me round the neck, are touching recollections to me, simple as they might appear to other men.

She took possession of the keys soon after this, and went jingling about the house with the whole bunch in a little basket, tied to her slender waist. I seldom found that the places to which they belonged were locked, or that they were of any use except as a plaything for Jip—but Dora was pleased, and that pleased me,. She was quite satisfied that a good deal was effected by this make-belief of housekeeping; and was as merry as if we had been keeping a baby-house, for a joke.

So we went on. Dora was hardly less affectionate to my aunt than to me, and often told her of the time when she was afraid she was "a cross old thing." I never saw my aunt unbend more systematically to any one. She courted Jip, though Jip never responded; listened, day after day, to the guitar, though I am afraid she had no taste for music; never attacked the Incapables, though the temptation must have been severe; went wonderful distances on foot to purchase, as surprises, any trifles that she found out Dora wanted; and never came in by the garden, and missed her from the room, but she would call out, at the foot of the stairs, in a voice that sounded cheerfully all over the house:

"Where's Little Blossom!"

CHAPTER XLV.

MR. DICK FULFILS MY AUNT'S PREDICTIONS.

It was some time now, since I had left the Doctor. Living in his neighbourhood, I saw him frequently; and we all went to his house on two or three occasions to dinner or tea. The Old Soldier was in permanent quarters under the Doctor's roof. She was exactly the same as ever, and the same immortal butterflies hovered over her cap.

Like some other mothers, whom I have known in the

course of my life, Mrs. Markleham was far more fond of pleasure than her daughter was. She required a great deal of amusement, and, like a deep old soldier, pretended, in consulting her own inclinations, to be devoting herself to her child. The Doctor's desire that Annie should be entertained, was therefore particularly acceptable to this excellent parent; who expressed unqualified approval of his discretion.

I have no doubt, indeed, that she probed the Doctor's wound without knowing it. Meaning nothing but a certain matured frivolity and selfishness, not always inseparable from full-blown years, I think she confirmed him in his fear that he was a constraint upon his young wife, and that there was no congeniality of feeling between them, by so strongly commending his design of lightening the load of her life.

"My dear soul," she said to him one day when I was present, "you know there is no doubt it would be a little pokey for Annie to be always shut up here."

The Doctor nodded his benevolent head.

"When she comes to her mother's age," said Mrs. Markleham, with a flourish of her fan, "then it'll be another thing. You might put ME into a jail, with genteel society and a rubber, and I should never care to come out. But I am not Annie, you know; and Annie is not her mother."

"Surely, surely," said the Doctor.

"You are the best of creatures—no, I beg your pardon!" for the Doctor made a gesture of depreciation, "I must say before your face, as I always say behind your back, you are the best of creatures; but of course you don't—now do you?—enter into the same pursuits and fancies as Annie?"

"No," said the Doctor, in a sorrowful tone.

"No, of course not," retorted the Old Soldier. "Take your Dictionary, for example. What a useful work a Dictionary is! What a necessary work! The meanings of words! Without Doctor Johnson, or somebody of that sort, we might have been at this present moment calling an Italian-iron a bedstead. But we can't expect a Dictionary—especially when it's making—to interest Annie, can we?"

The Doctor shook his head.

"And that's why I *so* much approve," said Mrs. Markleham, tapping him on the shoulder with her shut-up fan,

"of your thoughtfulness. It shows that you don't expect, as many elderly people do expect, old heads on young shoulders. You have studied Annie's character, and you understand it. *That's* what I find so charming!"

Even the calm and patient face of Doctor Strong expressed some little sense of pain, I thought, under the infliction of these compliments.

"Therefore, my dear Doctor," said the Soldier, giving him several affectionate taps, "you may command me, at all times and seasons. Now, do understand that I am entirely at your service. I am ready to go with Annie to operas, concerts, exhibitions, all kinds of places; and you shall never find that I am tired. Duty, my dear Doctor, before every consideration in the universe!"

She was as good as her word. She was one of those people who can bear a great deal of pleasure, and she never flinched in her perseverance in the cause. She seldom got hold of the newspaper (which she settled herself down in the softest chair in the house to read through an eye-glass, every day, for two hours), but she found out something that she was certain Annie would like to see. It was in vain for Annie to protest that she was weary of such things. Her mother's remonstrance always was, "Now, my dear Annie, I am sure you know better; and I must tell you, my love, that you are not making a proper return for the kindness of Doctor Strong."

This was usually said in the Doctor's presence, and appeared to me to constitute Annie's principal inducement for withdrawing her objections when she made any. But in general she resigned herself to her mother, and went where the Old Soldier would.

It rarely happened now that Mr. Maldon accompanied them. Sometimes my aunt and Dora were invited to do so, and accepted the invitation. Sometimes Dora only was asked. The time had been, when I should have been uneasy in her going; but reflection on what had passed that former night in the Doctor's study, had made a change in my mistrust. I believed that the Doctor was right, and I had no worse suspicions.

My aunt rubbed her nose sometimes when she happened to be alone with me, and said she couldn't make it out; she wished they were happier; she didn't think our military friend (so she always called the Old Soldier) mended the

matter at all. My aunt further expressed her opinion, "that if our military friend would cut off those butterflies, and give 'em to the chimney-sweepers for May Day, it would look like the beginning of something sensible on her part."

But her abiding reliance was on Mr. Dick. That man had evidently an idea in his head, she said; and if he could only once pen it up into a corner, which was his great difficulty, he would distinguish himself in some extraordinary manner.

Unconscious of this prediction, Mr. Dick continued to occupy precisely the same ground in reference to the Doctor and to Mrs. Strong. He seemed neither to advance nor to recede. He appeared to have settled into his original foundation, like a building; and I must confess that my faith in his ever moving, was not much greater than if he had been a building.

But one night, when I had been married some months, Mr. Dick put his head into the parlour, where I was writing alone (Dora having gone out with my aunt to take tea with the two little birds), and said, with a significant cough:

"You couldn't speak to me without inconveniencing yourself, Trotwood, I am afraid?"

"Certainly, Mr. Dick," said I; "come in!"

"Trotwood," said Mr. Dick, laying his finger on the side of his nose, after he had shaken hands with me. "Before I sit down, I wish to make an observation. You know your aunt?"

"A little," I replied.

"She is the most wonderful woman in the world, Sir!"

After the delivery of this communication, which he shot out of himself as if he were loaded with it, Mr. Dick sat down with greater gravity than usual, and looked at me.

"Now, boy," said Mr. Dick, "I am going to put a question to you."

"As many as you please," said I.

"What do you consider me, Sir?" asked Mr. Dick, folding his arms.

"A dear old friend," said I.

"Thank you, Trotwood," returned Mr. Dick, laughing, and reaching across in high glee to shake hands with me.

"But I mean, boy," resuming his gravity, "what do you consider me in this respect?" touching his forehead.

I was puzzled how to answer, but he helped me with a word.

"Weak?" said Mr. Dick.

"Well," I replied, dubiously. "Rather so."

"Exactly!" cried Mr. Dick, who seemed quite enchanted by my reply. "That is, Trotwood, when they took some of the trouble out of you-know-who's head, and put it you know where, there was a——" Mr. Dick made his two hands revolve very fast about each other a great number of times, and then brought them into collision, and rolled them over and over one another, to express confusion. "There was that sort of thing done to me somehow? Eh?"

I nodded at him, and he nodded back again.

"In short, boy," said Mr. Dick, dropping his voice to a whisper, "I am simple."

I would have qualified that conclusion, but he stopped me.

"Yes, I am! She pretends I am not. She won't hear of it; but I am. I know I am. If she hadn't stood my friend, Sir, I should have been shut up, to lead a dismal life these many years. But I'll provide for her! I never spend the copying money. I put it in a box. I have made a will. I'll leave it all to her. She shall be rich—noble!"

Mr. Dick took out his pocket-handkerchief, and wiped his eyes. He then folded it up with great care, pressed it smooth between his two hands, put it in his pocket, and seemed to put my aunt away with it.

"Now you are a scholar, Trotwood," said Mr. Dick. "You are a fine scholar. You know what a learned man, what a great man, the Doctor is. You know what honour he has always done me. Not proud in his wisdom. Humble, humble—condescending even to poor Dick, who is simple and knows nothing. I have sent his name up, on a scrap of paper, to the kite, along the string, when it has been in the sky, among the larks. The kite has been glad to receive it, Sir, and the sky has been brighter with it."

I delighted him by saying, most heartily, that the Doctor was deserving of our best respect and highest esteem.

"And his beautiful wife is a star," said Mr. Dick. "A shining star. I have seen her shine, Sir. But," bringing his chair nearer, and laying one hand upon my knee—"clouds, Sir—clouds."

I answered the solicitude which his face expressed, by conveying the same expression into my own, and shaking my head.

"What clouds?" said Mr. Dick.

He looked so wistfully into my face, and was so anxious to understand, that I took great pains to answer him slowly and distinctly, as I might have entered on an explanation to a child.

"There is some unfortunate division between them," I replied. "Some unhappy cause of separation. A secret. It may be inseparable from the discrepancy in their years. It may have grown up out of almost nothing."

Mr. Dick, who told off every sentence with a thoughtful nod, paused when I had done, and sat considering, with his eyes upon my face, and his hand upon my knee.

"Doctor not angry with her, Trotwood?" he said, after some time.

"No. Devoted to her."

"Then, I have got it, boy!" said Mr. Dick.

The sudden exultation with which he slapped me on the knee, and leaned back in his chair, with his eyebrows lifted up as high as he could possibly lift them, made me think him farther out of his wits than ever. He became as suddenly grave again, and leaning forward as before, said—first respectfully taking out his pocket-handkerchief, as if it really did represent my aunt:

"Most wonderful woman in the world, Trotwood. Why has *she* done nothing to set things right?"

"Too delicate and difficult a subject for such interference," I replied.

"Fine scholar," said Mr. Dick, touching me with his finger. "Why has *he* done nothing?"

"For the same reason," I returned.

"Then, I have got it, boy!" said Mr. Dick. And he stood up before me, more exultingly than before, nodding his head, and striking himself repeatedly upon the breast, until one might have supposed that he had nearly nodded and struck all the breath out of his body.

"A poor fellow with a craze, Sir," said Mr. Dick, "a simpleton, a weak-minded person—present company, you know!" striking himself again, "may do what wonderful people may not do. I'll bring them together, boy. I'll try. They'll not blame *me*. They'll not object to *me*.

They'll not mind what *I* do, if it's wrong. I'm only Mr. Dick. And who minds Dick? Dick's nobody! Whoo!" He blew a slight, contemptuous breath, as if he blew himself away.

It was fortunate he had proceeded so far with his mystery, for we heard the coach stop at the little garden-gate, which brought my aunt and Dora home.

"Not a word, boy!" he pursued in a whisper; "leave all the blame with Dick—simple Dick—mad Dick. I have been thinking, Sir, for some time, that I was getting it, and now I have got it. After what you have said to me, I am sure I have got it. All right!"

Not another word did Mr. Dick utter on the subject; but he made a very telegraph of himself for the next half-hour (to the great disturbance of my aunt's mind), to enjoin inviolable secrecy on me.

To my surprise, I heard no more about it for some two or three weeks, though I was sufficiently interested in the result of his endeavours; descrying a strange gleam of good sense—I say nothing of good feeling, for that he always exhibited—in the conclusion to which he had come. At last I began to believe, that, in the flighty and unsettled state of his mind, he had either forgotten his intention or abandoned it.

One fair evening, when Dora was not inclined to go out, my aunt and I strolled up to the Doctor's cottage. It was autumn, when there were no debates to vex the evening air; and I remember how the leaves smelt like our garden at Blunderstone as we trod them underfoot, and how the old, unhappy feeling, seemed to go by, on the sighing wind.

It was twilight when we reached the cottage. Mrs. Strong was just coming out of the garden, where Mr. Dick yet lingered, busy with his knife, helping the gardener to point some stakes. The Doctor was engaged with some one in his study; but the visitor would be gone directly, Mrs. Strong said, and begged us to remain and see him. We went into the drawing-room with her, and sat down by the darkening window. There was never any ceremony about the visits of such old friends and neighbours as we were.

We had not sat here many minutes, when Mrs. Markleham, who usually contrived to be in a fuss about something, came bustling in, with her newspaper in her hand, and said,

out of breath, "My goodness gracious, Annie, why didn't you tell me there was some one in the Study!"

"My dear mama," she quietly returned, "how could I know that you desired the information!"

"Desired the information!" said Mrs. Markleham, sinking on the sofa. "I never had such a turn in all my life!"

"Have you been to the Study, then, mama?" asked Annie.

"*Been* to the Study, my dear!" she returned emphatically. "Indeed I have! I came upon the amiable creature—if you'll imagine my feelings, Miss Trotwood and David—in the act of making his will."

Her daughter looked round from the window quickly.

"In the act, my dear Annie," repeated Mrs. Markleham, spreading the newspaper on her lap like a table-cloth, and patting her hands upon it, "of making his last Will and Testament. The foresight and affection of the dear! I must tell you how it was. I really must, in justice to the darling—for he is nothing less!—tell you how it was. Perhaps you know, Miss Trotwood, that there is never a candle lighted in this house, until one's eyes are literally falling out of one's head with being stretched to read the paper. And that there is not a chair in this house, in which a paper can be what *I* call, read, except one in the Study. This took me to the Study, where I saw a light. I opened the door. In company with the dear Doctor were two professional people, evidently connected with the law, and they were all three standing at the table: the darling Doctor pen in hand. 'This simply expresses then,' said the Doctor—Annie, my love, attend to the very words—'this simply expresses then, gentlemen, the confidence I have in Mrs. Strong, and gives her all unconditionally?' One of the professional people replied, 'And gives her all unconditionally.' Upon that, with the natural feelings of a mother, I said, 'Good God, I beg your pardon!' fell over the doorstep, and came away through the little back-passage where the pantry is."

Mrs. Strong opened the window, and went out into the verandah, where she stood leaning against a pillar.

"But now isn't it, Miss Trotwood, isn't it, David, invigorating," said Mrs. Markleham, mechanically following her with her eyes, "to find a man at Doctor Strong's time of life, with the strength of mind to do this kind of thing?

It only shows how right I was. I said to Annie, when Doctor Strong paid a very flattering visit to myself, and made her the subject of a declaration and an offer, I said, 'My dear, there is no doubt whatever, in my opinion, with reference to a suitable provision for you, that Doctor Strong will do more than he binds himself to do.'"

Here the bell rang, and we heard the sound of the visitors' feet as they went out.

"It's all over, no doubt," said the Old Soldier, after listening; "the dear creature has signed, sealed, and delivered, and his mind's at rest. Well it may be! What a mind! Annie, my love, I am going to the Study with my paper, for I am a poor creature without news. Miss Trotwood, David, pray come and see the Doctor."

I was conscious of Mr. Dick's standing in the shadow of the room, shutting up his knife, when we accompanied her to the Study; and of my aunt's rubbing her nose violently, by the way, as a mild vent for her intolerance of our military friend; but who got first into the Study, or how Mrs. Markleham settled herself in a moment in her easy-chair, or how my aunt and I came to be left together near the door (unless her eyes were quicker than mine, and she held me back), I have forgotten, if I ever knew. But this I know,—that we saw the Doctor before he saw us, sitting at his table, among the folio volumes in which he delighted, resting his head calmly on his hand. That, in the same moment, we saw Mrs. Strong glide in, pale and trembling. That Mr. Dick supported her on his arm. That he laid his other hand upon the Doctor's arm, causing him to look up with an abstracted air. That, as the Doctor moved his head, his wife dropped down on one knee at his feet, and, with her hands imploringly lifted, fixed upon his face the memorable look I had never forgotten. That at this sight Mrs. Markleham dropped the newspaper, and stared more like a figure-head intended for a ship to be called The Astonishment, then anything else I can think of.

The gentleness of the Doctor's manner and surprise, the dignity that mingled with the supplicating attitude of his wife, the amiable concern of Mr. Dick, and the earnestness with which my aunt said to herself, "*That* man mad!" (triumphantly expressive of the misery from which she had saved him), I see and hear, rather than remember, as I write about it.

"Doctor!" said Mr. Dick. "What is it that's amiss? Look here!"

"Annie!" cried the Doctor. "Not at my feet, my dear!"

"Yes!" she said. "I beg and pray that no one will leave the room! Oh, my husband and father, break this long silence. Let us both know what it is that has come between us!"

Mrs. Markleham, by this time recovering the power of speech, and seeming to swell with family pride and motherly indignation, here exclaimed, "Annie, get up immediately, and don't disgrace everybody belonging to you by humbling yourself like that, unless you wish to see me go out of my mind on the spot!"

"Mama!" returned Annie. "Waste no words on me, for my appeal is to my husband, and even you are nothing here."

"Nothing!" exclaimed Mrs. Markleham. "Me, nothing! The child has taken leave of her senses. Please to get me a glass of water!"

I was too attentive to the Doctor and his wife, to give any heed to this request; and it made no impression on anybody else; so Mrs. Markleham panted, stared, and fanned herself.

"Annie!" said the Doctor, tenderly taking her in his hands. "My dear! If any unavoidable change has come, in the sequence of time, upon our married life, you are not to blame. The fault is mine, and only mine. There is no change in my affection, admiration, and respect. I wish to make you happy. I truly love and honour you. Rise, Annie, pray!"

But she did not rise. After looking at him for a little while, she sank down closer to him, laid her arm across his knee, and dropping her head upon it, said:

"If I have any friend here, who can speak one word for me, or for my husband, in this matter; if I have any friend here, who can give a voice to any suspicion that my heart has sometimes whispered to me; if I have any friend here, who honours my husband, or has ever cared for me, and has anything within his knowledge, no matter what it is, that may help to mediate between us,—I implore that friend to speak!"

There was a profound silence. After a few moments of painful hesitation, I broke the silence.

"Mrs. Strong," I said, "there is something within my knowledge, which I have been earnestly entreated by Doctor Strong to conceal, and have concealed until to-night. But, I believe the time has come when it would be mistaken faith and delicacy to conceal it any longer, and when your appeal absolves me from this injunction."

She turned her face towards me for a moment, and I knew that I was right. I could not have resisted its entreaty, if the assurance that it gave me had been less convincing.

"Our future peace," she said, "may be in your hands. I trust it confidently to your not suppressing anything. I know beforehand that nothing you, or anyone, can tell me, will show my husband's noble heart in any other light than one. Howsoever it may seem to you to touch me, disregard that. I will speak for myself, before him, and before God afterwards."

Thus earnestly besought, I made no reference to the Doctor for his permission, but, without any other compromise of the truth than a little softening of the coarseness of Uriah Heep, related plainly what had passed in that same room that night. The staring of Mrs. Markleham during the whole narration, and the shrill, sharp interjections with which she occasionally interrupted it, defy description.

When I had finished, Annie remained, for some few moments, silent, with her head bent down, as I have described. Then, she took the Doctor's hand (he was sitting in the same attitude as when we had entered the room), and pressed it to her breast, and kissed it. Mr. Dick softly raised her; and she stood, when she began to speak, leaning on him, and looking down upon her husband—from whom she never turned her eyes.

"All that has ever been in my mind, since I was married," she said in a low, submissive, tender voice, "I will lay bare before you. I could not live and have one reservation, knowing what I know now."

"Nay, Annie," said the Doctor, mildly, "I have never doubted you, my child. There is no need; indeed there is no need, my dear."

"There is great need," she answered, in the same way, "that I should open my whole heart before the soul of

generosity and truth, whom, year by year, and day by day, I have loved and venerated more and more, as Heaven knows!"

"Really," interrupted Mrs. Markleham, "if I have any discretion at all——"

("Which you haven't, you Marplot," observed my aunt, in an indignant whisper.)

—"I must be permitted to observe that it cannot be requisite to enter into these details."

"No one but my husband can judge of that, mama," said Annie, without removing her eyes from his face, "and he will hear me. If I say anything to give you pain, mama, forgive me. I have borne pain first, often and long, myself."

"Upon my word!" gasped Mrs. Markleham.

"When I was very young," said Annie, "quite a little child, my first associations with knowledge of any kind were inseparable from a patient friend and teacher—the friend of my dead father—who was always dear to me. I can remember nothing that I know, without remembering him. He stored my mind with its first treasures, and stamped his character upon them all. They never could have been, I think, as good as they have been to me, if I had taken them from any other hands."

"Makes her mother nothing!" exclaimed Mrs. Markleham.

"Not so, mama," said Annie; "but I make him what he was. I must do that. As I grew up, he occupied the same place still. I was proud of his interest: deeply, fondly, gratefully attached to him. I looked up to him I can hardly describe how—as a father, as a guide, as one whose praise was different from all other praise, as one in whom I could have trusted and confided, if I had doubted all the world. You know, mama, how young and inexperienced I was, when you presented him before me, of a sudden, as a lover."

"I have mentioned the fact, fifty times at least, to everybody here!" said Mrs. Markleham.

("Then hold your tongue, for the Lord's sake, and don't mention it any more!" muttered my aunt.)

"It was so great a change: so great a loss, I felt it at first," said Annie, still preserving the same look and tone, "that I was agitated and distressed. I was but a girl; and

when so great a change came in the character in which I had so long looked up to him, I think I was sorry. But nothing could have made him what he used to be again; and I was proud that he should think me so worthy, and we were married."

"—At Saint Alphage, Canterbury," observed Mrs. Markleham.

("Confound the woman!" said my aunt, "she *won't* be quiet!")

"I never thought," proceeded Annie, with a heightened colour, "of any worldly gain that my husband would bring to me. My young heart had no room in its homage for any such poor reference. Mama, forgive me when I say that it was *you* who first presented to my mind the thought that anyone could wrong me, and wrong him, by such a cruel suspicion."

"Me!" cried Mrs. Markleham.

("Ah! You, to be sure!" observed my aunt, "and you can't fan it away, my military friend!")

"It was the first unhappiness of my new life," said Annie. "It was the first occasion of every unhappy moment I have known. Those moments have been more, of late, than I can count; but not—my generous husband!—not for the reason you suppose; for in my heart there is not a thought, a recollection, or a hope, that any power could separate from you!"

She raised her eyes, and clasped her hands, and looked as beautiful and true, I thought, as any Spirit. The Doctor looked on her, henceforth, as steadfastly as she on him.

"Mama is blameless," she went on, "of having ever urged you for herself, and she is blameless in intention every way, I am sure,—but when I saw how many importunate claims were pressed upon you in my name; how you were traded on in my name; how generous you were, and how Mr. Wickfield, who had your welfare very much at heart, resented it; the first sense of my exposure to the mean suspicion that my tenderness was bought—and sold to you, of all men, on earth—fell upon me, like unmerited disgrace, in which I forced you to participate. I cannot tell you what it was—mama cannot imagine what it was—to have this dread and trouble always on my mind, yet know in my own soul that on my marriage-day I crowned the love and honour of my life!"

"A specimen of the thanks one gets," cried Mrs. Markleham, in tears, "for taking care of one's family! I wish I was a Turk!"

("I wish you were, with all my heart—and in your native country!" said my aunt.)

"It was at that time that mama was most solicitous about my cousin Maldon. I had liked him:" she spoke softly, but without any hesitation: "very much. We had been little lovers once. If circumstances had not happened otherwise, I might have come to persuade myself that I really loved him, and might have married him, and been most wretched. There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose."

I pondered on those words, even while I was studiously attending to what followed, as if they had some particular interest, or some strange application that I could not divine. "There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose"—"no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose."

"There is nothing," said Annie, "that we have in common. I have long found that there is nothing. If I were thankful to my husband for no more, instead of for so much, I should be thankful to him for having saved me from the first mistaken impulse of my undisciplined heart."

She stood quite still, before the Doctor, and spoke with an earnestness that thrilled me. Yet her voice was just as quiet as before.

"When he was waiting to be the object of your munificence, so freely bestowed for my sake, and when I was unhappy in the mercenary shape I was made to wear, I thought it would have become him better to have worked his own way on. I thought that if I had been he, I would have tried to do it, at the cost of almost any hardship. But I thought no worse of him, until the night of his departure for India. That night I knew he had a false and thankless heart. I saw a double meaning, then, in Mr. Wickfield's scrutiny of me. I perceived, for the first time, the dark suspicion that shadowed my life."

"Suspicion, Annie!" said the Doctor. "No, no, no!"

"In your mind there was none, I know, my husband!" she returned. "And when I came to you, that night, to lay down all my load of shame and grief, and knew that I

had to tell, that, underneath your roof, one of my own kindred, to whom you had been a benefactor, for the love of me, had spoken to me words that should have found no utterance, even if I had been the weak and mercenary wretch he thought me—my mind revolted from the taint the very tale conveyed. It died upon my lips, and from that hour till now has never passed them."

Mrs. Markleham, with a short groan, leaned back in her easy-chair; and retired behind her fan, as if she were never coming out any more.

"I have never, but in your presence, interchanged a word with him from that time; then, only when it has been necessary for the avoidance of this explanation. Years have passed since he knew, from me, what his situation here was. The kindnesses you have secretly done for his advancement, and then disclosed to me, for my surprise and pleasure, have been, you will believe, but aggravations of the unhappiness and burden of my secret."

She sank down gently at the Doctor's feet, though he did his utmost to prevent her; and said, looking up, tearfully, into his face:

"Do not speak to me yet! Let me say a little more! Right or wrong, if this were to be done again, I think I should do just the same. You never can know what it was to be devoted to you, with those old associations; to find that anyone could be so hard as to suppose that the truth of my heart was bartered away, and to be surrounded by appearances confirming that belief. I was very young, and had no adviser. Between mama and me, in all relating to you, there was a wide division. If I shrank into myself, hiding the disrespect I had undergone, it was because I honoured you so much, and so much wished that you should honour me!"

"Annie, my pure heart!" said the Doctor, "my dear girl!"

"A little more! a very few words more! I used to think there were so many whom you might have married, who would not have brought such charge and trouble on you, and who would have made your home a worthier home. I used to be afraid that I had better have remained your pupil, and almost your child. I used to fear that I was so unsuited to your learning and wisdom. If all this made me shrink within myself (as indeed it did), when I

had that to tell, it was still because I honoured you so much, and hoped that you might one day honour me."

"That day has shone this long time, Annie," said the Doctor, "and can have but one long night, my dear."

"Another word! I afterwards meant—steadfastly meant, and purposed to myself—to bear the whole weight of knowing the unworthiness of one to whom you had been so good. And now a last word, dearest and best of friends! The cause of the late change in you, which I have seen with so much pain and sorrow, and have sometimes referred to my old apprehension—at other times to lingering suppositions nearer to the truth—has been made clear to-night; and by an accident I have also come to know, to-night, the full measure of your noble trust in me, even under that mistake. I do not hope that any love and duty I may render in return, will ever make me worthy of your priceless confidence; but with all this knowledge fresh upon me, I can lift my eyes to this dear face, revered as a father's, loved as a husband's, sacred to me in my childhood as a friend's, and solemnly declare that in my lightest thought I had never wronged you; never wavered in the love and the fidelity I owe you!"

She had her arms around the Doctor's neck, and he leant his head down over her, mingling his grey hair with her dark brown tresses.

"Oh, hold me to your heart, my husband! Never cast me out! Do not think or speak of disparity between us, for there is none, except in all my many imperfections. Every succeeding year I have known this better, as I have esteemed you more and more. Oh, take me to your heart, my husband, for my love was founded on a rock, and it endures!"

In the silence that ensued, my aunt walked gravely up to Mr. Dick, without at all hurrying herself, and gave him a hug and a sounding kiss. And it was very fortunate, with a view to his credit, that she did so; for I am confident that I detected him at that moment in the act of making preparations to stand on one leg, as an appropriate expression of delight.

"You are a very remarkable man, Dick!" said my aunt, with an air of unqualified approbation; "and never pretend to be anything else, for I know better!"

With that, my aunt pulled him by the sleeve, and nod-

ded to me; and we three stole quietly out of the room, and came away.

"That's a settler for our military friend, at any rate," said my aunt, on the way home. "I should sleep the better for that, if there was nothing else to be glad of!"

"She was quite overcome, I am afraid," said Mr. Dick, with great commiseration.

"What? Did you ever see a crocodile overcome?" inquired my aunt.

"I don't think I ever saw a crocodile," returned Mr. Dick, mildly.

"There never would have been anything the matter, if it hadn't been for that old Animal," said my aunt, with strong emphasis. "It's very much to be wished that some mothers would leave their daughters alone after marriage, and not be so violently affectionate. They seem to think the only return that can be made them for bringing an unfortunate young woman into the world—God bless my soul, as if she asked to be brought, or wanted to come!—is full liberty to worry her out of it again. What are you thinking of, Trot?"

I was thinking of all that had been said. My mind was still running on some of the expressions used. "There can be no disparity in marriage like unsuitability of mind and purpose." "The first mistaken impulse of an undisciplined heart." "My love was founded on a rock." But we were at home; and the trodden leaves were lying underfoot, and the autumn wind was blowing.

CHAPTER XLVI.

INTELLIGENCE.

I MUST have been married, if I may trust to my imperfect memory for dates, about a year or so, when one evening, as I was returning from a solitary walk, thinking of the book I was then writing—for my success had steadily increased with my steady application, and I was engaged at that time upon my first work of fiction—I came past Mrs. Steerforth's house. I had often passed it before, during my residence in that neighbourhood, though never when

I could choose another road. Howbeit, it did sometimes happen that it was not easy to find another, without making a long circuit; and so I had passed that way, upon the whole, pretty often.

I had never done more than glance at the house, as I went by with a quickened step. It had been uniformly gloomy and dull. None of the best rooms abutted on the road; and the narrow, heavily-framed old-fashioned windows, never cheerful under any circumstances, looked very dismal, close shut, and with their blinds always drawn down. There was a covered way across a little paved court, to an entrance that was never used; and there was one round staircase window, at odds with all the rest, and the only one unshaded by a blind, which had the same unoccupied blank look. I do not remember that I ever saw a light in all the house. If I had been a casual passer-by, I should have probably supposed that some childless person lay dead in it. If I had happily possessed no knowledge of the place, and had seen it often in that changeless state, I should have pleased my fancy with many ingenious speculations, I dare say.

As it was, I thought as little of it as I might. But my mind could not go by it and leave it, as my body did; and it usually awakened a long train of meditations. Coming before me, on this particular evening that I mention, mingled with the childish recollections and later fancies, the ghosts of half-formed hopes, the broken shadows of disappointments dimly seen and understood, the blending of experience and imagination, incidental to the occupation with which my thoughts had been busy, it was more than commonly suggestive. I fell into a brown study as I walked on, and a voice at my side made me start.

It was a woman's voice, too. I was not long in recollecting Mrs. Steerforth's little parlour-maid, who had formerly worn blue ribbons in her cap. She had taken them out now, to adapt herself, I suppose, to the altered character of the house; and wore but one or two disconsolate bows of sober brown.

"If you please, Sir, would you have the goodness to walk in, and speak to Miss Dartle?"

"Has Miss Dartle sent you for me?" I inquired.

"Not to-night, Sir, but it's just the same. Miss Dartle saw you pass a night or two ago; and I was to sit at work

on the staircase, and when I saw you pass again, to ask you to step in and speak to her."

I turned back, and inquired of my conductor, as we went along, how Mrs. Steerforth was. She said her lady was but poorly, and kept her own room a good deal.

When we arrived at the house, I was directed to Miss Dartle in the garden, and left to make my presence known to her myself. She was sitting on a seat at one end of a kind of terrace, overlooking the great city. It was a sombre evening, with a lurid light in the sky; and as I saw the prospect scowling in the distance, with here and there some larger object starting up into the sullen glare, I fancied it was no inapt companion to the memory of this fierce woman.

She saw me as I advanced, and rose for a moment to receive me. I thought her, then, still more colourless and thin than when I had seen her last; the flashing eyes still brighter, and the scar still plainer.

Our meeting was not cordial. We had parted angrily on the last occasion; and there was an air of disdain about her, which she took no pains to conceal.

"I am told you wish to speak to me, Miss Dartle;" said I, standing near her, with my hand upon the back of the seat, and declining her gesture of invitation to sit down.

"If you please," said she. "Pray has this girl been found?"

"No."

"And yet she has run away!"

I saw her thin lips working while she looked at me, as if they were eager to load her with reproaches.

"Run away?" I repeated.

"Yes! From him," she said, with a laugh. "If she is not found, perhaps she never will be found. She may be dead!"

The vaunting cruelty with which she met my glance, I never saw expressed in any other face that ever I have seen.

"To wish her dead," said I, "may be the kindest wish that one of her own sex could bestow upon her. I am glad that time has softened you so much, Miss Dartle."

She condescended to make no reply, but, turning on me with another scornful laugh, said:

"The friends of this excellent and much-injured young lady are friends of yours. You are their champion, and

assert their rights. Do you wish to know what is known of her?"

"Yes," said I.

She rose with an ill-favoured smile, and taking a few steps towards a wall of holly that was near at hand, dividing the lawn from a kitchen-garden, said, in a louder voice, "Come here!"—as if she were calling to some unclean beast.

"You will restrain any demonstrative championship or vengeance in this place, of course, Mr. Copperfield?" said she, looking over her shoulder at me with the same expression.

I inclined my head, without knowing what she meant; and she said, "Come here!" again; and returned, followed by the respectable Mr. Littimer, who, with undiminished respectability, made me a bow, and took up his position behind her. The air of wicked grace: of triumph, in which, strange to say, there was yet something feminine and alluring: with which she reclined upon the seat between us, and looked at me, was worthy of a cruel princess in a legend.

"Now," said she, imperiously, without glancing at him, and touching the old wound as it throbbed: perhaps, in this instance, with pleasure rather than pain. "Tell Mr. Copperfield about the flight."

"Mr. James and myself, ma'am——"

"Don't address yourself to me!" she interrupted with a frown.

"Mr. James and myself, Sir——"

"Nor to me, if you please," said I.

Mr. Littimer, without being at all discomposed, signified by a slight obeisance, that anything that was most agreeable to us was most agreeable to him; and began again:

"Mr. James and myself have been abroad with the young woman, ever since she left Yarmouth under Mr. James's protection. We have been in a variety of places, and seen a deal of foreign country. We have been in France, Switzerland, Italy—in fact, almost all parts."

He looked at the back of the seat, as if he were addressing himself to that; and softly played upon it with his hands, as if he were striking chords upon a dumb piano.

"Mr. James took quite uncommonly to the young woman; and was more settled for a length of time, than I have

known him to be since I have been in his service. The young woman was very improvable, and spoke the languages; and wouldn't have been known for the same country-person. I noticed that she was much admired wherever we went."

Miss Dartle put her hand upon her side. I saw him steal a glance at her, and slightly smile to himself.

"Very much admired, indeed, the young woman was. What with her dress; what with the air and sun; what with being made so much of; what with this, that, and the other; her merits really attracted general notice."

He made a short pause. Her eyes wandered restlessly over the distant prospect, and she bit her nether lip to stop that busy mouth.

Taking his hands from the seat, and placing one of them within the other, as he settled himself on one leg, Mr. Littimer proceeded, with his eyes cast down, and his respectable head a little advanced, and a little on one side:

"The young woman went on in this manner for some time, being occasionally low in her spirits, until I think she began to weary Mr. James by giving way to her low spirits and tempers of that kind; and things were not so comfortable. Mr. James he began to be restless again. The more restless he got, the worse she got; and I must say, for myself, that I had a very difficult time of it indeed between the two. Still matters were patched up here, and made good there, over and over again; and altogether lasted, I am sure, for a longer time than anybody could have expected."

Recalling her eyes from the distance, she looked at me again now, with her former air. Mr. Littimer, clearing his throat behind his hand with a respectable short cough, changed legs, and went on:

"At last, when there had been, upon the whole, a good many words and reproaches, Mr. James he set off one morning, from the neighbourhood of Naples, where we had a villa (the young woman being very partial to the sea), and, under pretence of coming back in a day or so, left it in charge with me to break it out, that, for the general happiness of all concerned, he was"—here an interruption of the short cough—"gone. But Mr. James, I must say, certainly did behave extremely honourable; for he proposed that the young woman should marry a very respectable

person, who was fully prepared to overlook the past, and who was, at least, as good as anybody the young woman could have aspired to in a regular way: her connexions being very common."

He changed legs again, and wetted his lips. I was convinced that the scoundrel spoke of himself, and I saw my conviction reflected in Miss Dartle's face.

"This I also had it in charge to communicate. I was willing to do anything to relieve Mr. James from his difficulty, and to restore harmony between himself and an affectionate parent, who has undergone so much on his account. Therefore I undertook the commission. The young woman's violence when she came to, after I broke the fact of his departure, was beyond all expectations. She was quite mad, and had to be held by force; or, if she couldn't have got to a knife, or got to the sea, she'd have beaten her head against the marble floor."

Miss Dartle, leaning back upon the seat, with a light of exultation in her face, seemed almost to caress the sounds this fellow had uttered.

"But when I came to the second part of what had been entrusted to me," said Mr. Littimer, rubbing his hands, uneasily, "which anybody might have supposed would have been, at all events, appreciated as a kind intention, then the young woman came out in her true colours. A more outrageous person I never did see. Her conduct was surprisingly bad. She had no more gratitude, no more feeling, no more patience, no more reason in her, than a stock or a stone. If I hadn't been upon my guard, I am convinced she would have had my blood."

"I think the better of her for it," said I, indignantly.

Mr. Littimer bent his head, as much as to say, "Indeed, Sir? But you're young!" and resumed his narrative.

"It was necessary, in short, for a time, to take away everything nigh her, that she could do herself, or anybody else, an injury with, and to shut her up close. Notwithstanding which, she got out in the night; forced the lattice of a window, that I had nailed up myself; dropped on a vine that was trailed below; and never has been seen or heard of, to my knowledge, since."

"She is dead, perhaps," said Miss Dartle, with a smile, as if she could have spurned the body of the ruined girl.

"She may have drowned herself, miss," returned Mr.

Littimer, catching at an excuse for addressing himself to somebody. "It's very possible. Or, she may have had assistance from the boatmen, and the boatmen's wives and children. Being given to low company, she was very much in the habit of talking to them on the beach, Miss Dartle, and sitting by their boats. I have known her do it, when Mr. James has been away, whole days. Mr. James was far from pleased to find out, once, that she had told the children she was a boatman's daughter, and that in her own country, long ago, she had roamed about the beach like them."

Oh, Emily! Unhappy beauty! What a picture rose before me of her sitting on the far-off shore, among the children like herself when she was innocent, listening to little voices such as might have called her Mother had she been a poor man's wife; and to the great voice of the sea, with its eternal "Never more!"

"When it was clear that nothing could be done, Miss Dartle——"

"Did I tell you not to speak to me?" she said, with stern contempt.

"You spoke to me, miss," he replied. "I beg your pardon. But it is my service to obey."

"Do your service," she returned. "Finish your story, and go!"

"When it was clear," he said, with infinite respectability, and an obedient bow, "that she was not to be found, I went to Mr. James, at the place where it had been agreed that I should write to him, and informed him of what had occurred. Words passed between us in consequence, and I felt it due to my character to leave him. I could bear, and I have borne, a great deal from Mr. James; but he insulted me too far. He hurt me. Knowing the unfortunate difference between himself and his mother, and what her anxiety of mind was likely to be, I took the liberty of coming home to England, and relating——"

"For money which I paid him," said Miss Dartle to me.

"Just so, ma'am—and relating what I knew. I am not aware," said Mr. Littimer, after a moment's reflection, "that there is anything else. I am at present out of employment, and should be happy to meet with a respectable situation."

Miss Dartle glanced at me, as though she would inquire

if there were anything that I desired to ask. As there was something which had occurred to my mind, I said in reply:

"I could wish to know from this—creature," I could not bring myself to utter any more conciliatory word, "whether they intercepted a letter that was written to her from home, or whether he supposes that she received it."

He remained calm and silent, with his eyes fixed on the ground, and the tip of every finger of his right hand delicately poised against the tip of every finger of his left.

Miss Dartle turned her head disdainfully towards him.

"I beg your pardon, miss," he said, awakening from his abstraction, "but, however submissive to you, I have my position, though a servant. Mr. Copperfield and you, miss, are different people. If Mr. Copperfield wishes to know anything from me, I take the liberty of reminding Mr. Copperfield that he can put a question to me. I have a character to maintain."

After a momentary struggle with myself, I turned my eyes upon him, and said, "You have heard my question. Consider it addressed to yourself, if you choose. What answer do you make?"

"Sir," he rejoined, with an occasional separation and reunion of those delicate tips, "my answer must be qualified; because, to betray Mr. James's confidence to his mother, and to betray it to you, are two different actions. It is not probable, I consider, that Mr. James would encourage the receipt of letters likely to increase low spirits and unpleasantness; but further than that, Sir, I should wish to avoid going."

"Is that all?" inquired Miss Dartle of me.

I indicated that I had nothing more to say. "Except," I added, as I saw him moving off, "that I understand this fellow's part in the wicked story, and that, as I shall make it known to the honest man who has been her father from her childhood, I would recommend him to avoid going too much into public."

He had stopped the moment I began, and had listened with his usual repose of manner.

"Thank you, Sir. But you'll excuse me if I say, Sir, that there are neither slaves nor slave-drivers in this country, and that people are not allowed to take the law into their own hands. If they do, it is more to their own peril,

I believe, than to other people's. Consequently speaking, I am not at all afraid of going wherever I may wish, Sir."

With that, he made a polite bow; and, with another to Miss Dartle, went away through the arch in the wall of holly by which he had come. Miss Dartle and I regarded each other for a little while in silence; her manner being exactly what it was, when she had produced the man.

"He says besides," she observed, with a slow curling of her lip, "that his master, as he hears, is coasting Spain; and this done, is away to gratify his seafaring tastes till he is weary. But that is of no interest to you. Between these two proud persons, mother and son, there is a wider breach than before, and little hope of its healing, for they are one at heart, and time makes each more obstinate and imperious. Neither is this of any interest to you; but it introduces what I wish to say. This devil whom you make an angel of, I mean this low girl whom he picked out of the tide-mud," with her black eyes full upon me, and her passionate finger up, "may be alive,—for I believe some common things are hard to die. If she is, you will desire to have a pearl of such price found and taken care of. We desire that, too; that he may not by any chance be made her prey again. So far, we are united in one interest; and that is why I, who would do her any mischief that so coarse a wretch is capable of feeling, have sent for you to hear what you have heard."

I saw, by the change of her face, that some one was advancing behind me. It was Mrs. Steerforth, who gave me her hand more coldly than of yore, and with an augmentation of her former stateliness of manner; but still, I perceived—and I was touched by it—with an ineffaceable remembrance of my old love for her son.. She was greatly altered. Her fine figure was far less upright, her handsome face was deeply marked, and her hair was almost white. But when she sat down on the seat, she was a handsome lady still; and well I knew the bright eye with its lofty look, that had been a light in my very dreams at school.

"Is Mr. Copperfield informed of everything, Rosa?"

"Yes."

"And has he heard Littimer himself?"

"Yes; I have told him why you wished it."

"You are a good girl. I have had some slight correspondence with your former friend, Sir," addressing me, "but it has not restored his sense of duty or natural obligation. Therefore I have no other object in this, than what Rosa has mentioned. If, by the course which may relieve the mind of the decent man you brought here (for whom I am sorry—I can say no more), my son may be saved from again falling into the snares of a designing enemy, well!"

She drew herself up, and sat looking straight before her, far away.

"Madam," I said respectfully, "I understand. I assure you I am in no danger of putting any strained construction on your motives. But I must say, even to you, having known this injured family from childhood, that if you suppose the girl, so deeply wronged, has not been cruelly deluded, and would not rather die a hundred deaths than take a cup of water from your son's hand now, you cherish a terrible mistake."

"Well, Rosa, well!" said Mrs. Steerforth, as the other was about to interpose, "it is no matter. Let it be. You are married, Sir, I am told?"

I answered that I had been some time married.

"And are doing well? I hear little in the quiet life I lead, but I understand you are beginning to be famous."

"I have been very fortunate," I said, "and find my name connected with some praise."

"You have no mother?"—in a softened voice.

"No."

"It is a pity," she returned. "She would have been proud of you. Good night!"

I took the hand she held out with a dignified, unbending air, and it was as calm in mine as if her breast had been at peace. Her pride could still its very pulses, it appeared, and draw the placid veil before her face, through which she sat looking straight before her on the far distance.

As I moved away from them along the terrace, I could not help observing how steadily they both sat gazing on the prospect, and how it thickened and closed around them. Here and there, some early lamps were seen to twinkle in the distant city; and in the eastern quarter of the sky the lurid light still hovered. But, from the greater part of the broad valley interposed, a mist was rising like a sea.

which, mingling with the darkness, made it seem as if the gathering waters would encompass them. I have reason to remember this, and think of it with awe; for before I looked upon those two again, a stormy sea had risen to their feet.

Reflecting on what had been thus told me, I felt it right that it should be communicated to Mr. Peggotty. On the following evening I went into London in quest of him. He was always wandering about from place to place, with his one object of recovering his niece before him; but was more in London than elsewhere. Often and often, now, had I seen him in the dead of night passing along the streets, searching, among the few who loitered out of doors at those untimely hours, for what he dreaded to find.

He kept a lodging over the little chandler's shop in Hungerford Market, which I have had occasion to mention more than once, and from which he first went forth upon his errand of mercy. Hither I directed my walk. On making inquiry for him, I learned from the people of the house that he had not gone out yet, and I should find him in his room up-stairs.

He was sitting reading by a window in which he kept a few plants. The room was very neat and orderly. I saw in a moment that it was always kept prepared for her reception, and that he never went out but he thought it possible he might bring her home. He had not heard my tap at the door, and only raised his eyes when I laid my hand upon his shoulder.

"Mas'r Davy! Thank'ee, Sir! thank'ee hearty, for this visit! Sit ye down. You're kindly welcome, Sir!"

"Mr. Peggotty," said I, taking the chair he handed me, "don't expect much! I have heard some news."

"Of Em'ly!"

He put his hand, in a nervous manner, on his mouth, and turned pale, as he fixed his eyes on mine.

"It gives no clue to where she is; but she is not with him."

He sat down, looking intently at me, and listened in profound silence to all I had to tell. I well remember the sense of dignity, beauty even, with which the patient gravity of his face impressed me, when, having gradually removed his eyes from mine, he sat looking downward, leaning his forehead on his hand. He offered no interruption,

but remained throughout perfectly still. He seemed to pursue her figure through the narrative, and to let every other shape go by him, as if it were nothing.

When I had done, he shaded his face, and continued silent. I looked out of the window for a little while, and occupied myself with the plants.

"How do you fare to feel about it, Mas'r Davy?" he inquired at length.

"I think that she is living," I replied.

"I doen't know. Maybe the first shock was too rough, and in the wildness of her 'art——! That there blue water as she used to speak on. Could she have thowt o' that so many year, because it was to be her grave!"

He said this, musing, in a low, frightened voice; and walked across the little room.

"And yet," he added, "Mas'r Davy, I have felt so sure as she was living—I have know'd, awake and sleeping, as it was so trew that I should find her—I have been so led on by it, and held up by it—that I doen't believe I can have been deceived. No! Em'ly's alive!"

He put his hand down firmly on the table, and set his sunburnt face into a resolute expression.

"My niece, Em'ly, is alive, Sir!" he said, steadfastly. "I doen't know wheer it comes from, or how 'tis, but *I am told* as she's alive!"

He looked almost like a man inspired, as he said it. I waited for a few moments, until he could give me his undivided attention; and then proceeded to explain the precaution, that, it had occurred to me last night, it would be wise to take.

"Now, my dear friend——" I began.

"Thank'ee, thank'ee, kind Sir," he said, grasping my hand in both of his.

"If she should make her way to London, which is likely—for where could she lose herself so readily as in this vast city; and what would she wish to do, but lose and hide herself, if she does not go home?——"

"And she won't go home," he interposed, shaking his head mournfully. "If she had left of her own accord, she might; not as 'twas, Sir."

"If she should come here," said I, "I believe there is one person, here, more likely to discover her than any other in the world. Do you remember—hear what I say, with

fortitude—think of your great object!—do you remember Martha?"

"Of our town?"

I needed no other answer than his face.

"Do you know that she is in London?"

"I have seen her in the streets," he answered, with a shiver.

"But you don't know," said I, "that Emily was charitable to her, with Ham's help, long before she fled from home. Nor, that, when we met one night, and spoke together in the room yonder, over the way, she listened at the door."

"Mas'r Davy?" he replied in astonishment. "That night when it snew so hard?"

"That night. I have never seen her since. I went back, after parting from you, to speak to her, but she was gone. I was unwilling to mention her to you then, and I am now; but she is the person of whom I speak, and with whom I think we should communicate. Do you understand?"

"Too well, Sir," he replied. We had sunk our voices, almost to a whisper, and continued to speak in that tone.

"You say you have seen her. Do you think that you could find her? I could only hope to do so by chance."

"I think, Mas'r Davy, I know wheer to look."

"It is dark. Being together, shall we go out now, and try to find her to-night?"

He assented, and prepared to accompany me. Without appearing to observe what he was doing, I saw how carefully he adjusted the little room, put a candle ready and the means of lighting it, arranged the bed, and finally took out of a drawer one of her dresses (I remembered to have seen her wear it), neatly folded with some other garments, and a bonnet, which he placed upon a chair. He made no allusion to these clothes, neither did I. There they had been waiting for her, many and many a night, no doubt.

"The time was, Mas'r Davy," he said, as we came down stairs, "when I thowt this girl, Martha, a'most like the dirt underneath my Em'ly's feet. God forgive me, there's a difference now!"

As we went along, partly to hold him in conversation, and partly to satisfy myself, I asked him about Ham. He said, almost in the same words as formerly, that Ham was just the same, "wearing away his life with kiender no care nohow for't; but never murmuring, and liked by all."

I asked him what he thought Ham's state of mind was,

in reference to the cause of their misfortunes? Whether he believed it was dangerous? What he supposed, for example, Ham would do, if he and Steerforth ever should encounter?

"I doen't know, Sir," he replied. "I have thowt of it oftentimes, but I can't arrize myself of it, no matters."

I recalled to his remembrance the morning after her departure, when we were all three on the beach. "Do you recollect," said I, "a certain wild way in which he looked out to sea, and spoke about 'the end of it?'"

"Sure I do!" said he.

"What do you suppose he meant?"

"Mas'r Davy," he replied, "I've put the question to myself a mort o' times, and never found no answer. And theer's one curous thing—that, though he is so pleasant, I wouldn't fare to feel comfortable to try and get his mind upon't. He never said a wured to me as warn't as dootiful as dootiful could be, and it ain't likely as he'd begin to speak any other ways now; but it's fur from being fleet water in his mind, where them thowts lay. It's deep, Sir, and I can't see down."

"You are right," said I, "and that has sometimes made me anxious."

"And me too, Mas'r Davy," he rejoined. "Even more so, I do assure you, than his ventersome ways, though both belongs to the alteration in him. I doen't know as he'd do violence under any circumstances, but I hope as them two may be kep asunders."

We had come, through Temple Bar, into the City. Conversing no more now, and walking at my side, he yielded himself up to the one aim of his devoted life, and went on, with that hushed concentration of his faculties which would have made his figure solitary in a multitude. We were not far from Blackfriars Bridge, when he turned his head and pointed to a solitary female figure flitting along the opposite side of the street. I knew it, readily, to be the figure that we sought.

We crossed the road, and were pressing on towards her, when it occurred to me that she might be more disposed to feel a woman's interest in the lost girl, if we spoke to her in a quieter place, aloof from the crowd, and where we should be less observed. I advised my companion, therefore, that we should not address her yet, but follow her;

consulting in this, likewise, an indistinct desire I had, to know where she went.

He acquiescing, we followed at a distance: never losing sight of her, but never caring to come very near, as she frequently looked about. Once she stopped to listen to a band of music; and then we stopped too.

She went on a long way. Still we went on. It was evident, from the manner in which she held her course, that she was going to some fixed destination; and this, and her keeping in the busy streets, and I suppose the strange fascination in the secrecy and mystery of so following anyone, made me adhere to my first purpose. At length she turned into a dull, dark street, where the noise and crowd were lost; and I said, "We may speak to her now;" and, mending our pace, we went after her.

CHAPTER XLVII.

MARTHA.

We were now down in Westminster. We had turned back to follow her, having encountered her coming towards us; and Westminster Abbey was the point at which she passed from the lights and noise of the leading streets. She proceeded so quickly, when she got free of the two currents of passengers setting towards and from the bridge, that, between this and the advance she had of us when she struck off, we were in the narrow water-side street by Millbank before we came up with her. At that moment she crossed the road, as if to avoid the footsteps that she heard so close behind; and, without looking back, passed on even more rapidly.

A glimpse of the river through a dull gateway, where some waggons were housed for the night, seemed to arrest my feet. I touched my companion without speaking, and we both forbore to cross after her, and both followed on that opposite side of the way; keeping as quietly as we could in the shadow of the houses, but keeping very near her.

There was, and is when I write, at the end of that low-lying street, a dilapidated little wooden building, probably an obsolete old ferry-house. Its position is just at that

point where the street ceases, and the road begins to lie between a row of houses and the river. As soon as she came here, and saw the water, she stopped as if she had come to her destination; and presently went slowly along by the brink of the river, looking intently at it.

All the way here, I had supposed that she was going to some house; indeed, I had vaguely entertained the hope that the house might be in some way associated with the lost girl. But that one dark glimpse of the river, through the gateway, had instinctively prepared me for her going no farther.

The neighbourhood was a dreary one at that time; as oppressive, sad, and solitary by night, as any about London. There were neither wharves nor houses on the melancholy waste of road near the great blank prison. A sluggish ditch deposited its mud at the prison walls. Coarse grass and rank weeds straggled over all the marshy land in the vicinity. In one part, carcases of houses, inauspiciously begun and never finished, rotted away. In another, the ground was cumbered with rusty iron monsters of steam-boilers, wheels, cranks, pipes, furnaces, paddles, anchors, diving-bells, windmill-sails, and I know not what strange objects, accumulated by some speculator, and grovelling in the dust, underneath which—having sunk into the soil of their own weight in wet weather—they had the appearance of vainly trying to hide themselves. The clash and glare of sundry fiery Works upon the river-side, arose by night to disturb everything except the heavy and unbroken smoke that poured out of their chimneys. Slimy gaps and causeways, winding among old wooden piles, with a sickly substance clinging to the latter, like green hair, and the rags of last year's handbills offering rewards for drowned men fluttering above high-water-mark, led down through the ooze and slush to the ebb-tide. There was a story that one of the pits dug for the dead in the time of the Great Plague was hereabout; and a blighting influence seemed to have proceeded from it over the whole place. Or else it looked as if it had gradually decomposed into that nightmare condition, out of the overflowings of the polluted stream.

As if she were a part of the refuse it had cast out, and left to corruption and decay, the girl we had followed strayed down to the river's brink, and stood in the midst of this night-picture, lonely and still, looking at the water.

There were some boats and barges astrand in the mud, and these enabled us to come within a few yards of her without being seen. I then signed to Mr. Peggotty to remain where he was, and emerged from their shade to speak to her. I did not approach her solitary figure without trembling; for this gloomy end to her determined walk, and the way in which she stood, almost within the cavernous shadow of the iron bridge, looking at the lights crookedly reflected in the strong tide, inspired a dread within me.

I think she was talking to herself. I am sure, although absorbed in gazing at the water, that her shawl was off her shoulders, and that she was muffling her hands in it, in an unsettled and bewildered way, more like the action of a sleep-walker than a waking person. I know, and never can forget, that there was that in her wild manner which gave me no assurance but that she would sink before my eyes, until I had her arm within my grasp.

At the same moment I said "Martha!"

She uttered a terrified scream, and struggled with me with such strength that I doubt if I could have held her alone. But a stronger hand than mine was laid upon her; and when she raised her frightened eyes and saw whose it was, she made but one more effort and dropped down between us. We carried her away from the water to where there were some dry stones, and there laid her down, crying and moaning. In a little while she sat among the stones, holding her wretched head with both her hands.

"Oh, the river!" she cried passionately. "Oh, the river!"

"Hush, hush!" said I. "Calm yourself."

But she still repeated the same words, continually exclaiming, "Oh, the river!" over and over again.

"I know it's like me!" she exclaimed. "I know that I belong to it. I know that it's the natural company of such as I am! It comes from country places, where there was once no harm in it—and it creeps through the dismal streets, defiled and miserable—and it goes away, like my life, to a great sea, that is always troubled—and I feel that I must go with it!"

I have never known what despair was, except in the tone of those words.

"I can't keep away from it. I can't forget it. It haunts me day and night. It's the only thing in all the world

that I am fit for, or that's fit for me. Oh, the dreadful river!"

The thought passed through my mind that in the face of my companion, as he looked upon her without speech or motion, I might have read his niece's history, if I had known nothing of it. I never saw, in any painting or reality, horror and compassion so impressively blended. He shook as if he would have fallen; and his hand—I touched it with my own, for his appearance alarmed me—was deadly cold.

"She is in a state of frenzy," I whispered to him. "She will speak differently in a little time."

I don't know what he would have said in answer. He made some motion with his mouth, and seemed to think he had spoken; but he had only pointed to her with his outstretched hand.

A new burst of crying came upon her now, in which she once more hid her face among the stones, and lay before us, a prostrate image of humiliation and ruin. Knowing that this state must pass, before we could speak to her with any hope, I ventured to restrain him when he would have raised her, and we stood by in silence until she became more tranquil.

"Martha," said I then, leaning down, and helping her to rise—she seemed to want to rise as if with the intention of going away, but she was weak, and leaned against a boat. "Do you know who this is, who is with me?"

She said faintly, "Yes."

"Do you know that we have followed you a long way to-night?"

She shook her head. She looked neither at him nor at me, but stood in a humble attitude, holding her bonnet and shawl in one hand, without appearing conscious of them, and pressing the other, clenched, against her forehead.

"Are you composed enough," said I, "to speak on the subject which so interested you—I hope Heaven may remember it!—that snowy night?"

Her sobs broke out afresh, and she murmured some inarticulate thanks to me for not having driven her away from the door.

"I want to say nothing for myself," she said, after a few moments. "I am bad, I am lost. I have no hope at all. But tell him, Sir," she had shrunk away from him, "if you

don't feel too hard to me to do it, that I never was in any way the cause of his misfortune."

"It has never been attributed to you," I returned, earnestly responding to her earnestness.

"It was you, if I don't deceive myself," she said, in a broken voice, "that came into the kitchen, the night she took such pity on me; was so gentle to me; didn't shrink away from me like all the rest, and gave me such kind help! Was it you, Sir?"

"It was," said I.

"I should have been in the river long ago," she said, glancing at it with a terrible expression, "if any wrong to her had been upon my mind. I never could have kept out of it a single winter's night, if I had not been free of any share in that!"

"The cause of her flight is too well understood," I said. "You are innocent of any part in it, we thoroughly believe,—we know."

"Oh I might have been much the better for her, if I had had a better heart!" exclaimed the girl, with most forlorn regret; "for she was always good to me! She never spoke a word to me but what was pleasant and right. Is it likely I would try to make her what I am myself, knowing what I am myself so well! When I lost everything that makes life dear, the worst of all my thoughts was that I was parted for ever from her!"

Mr. Peggotty, standing with one hand on the gunwale of the boat, and his eyes cast down, put his disengaged hand before his face.

"And when I heard what had happened before that snowy night, from some belonging to our town," cried Martha, "the bitterest thought in all my mind was, that the people would remember she once kept company with me, and would say I had corrupted her! When, Heaven knows, I would have died to have brought back her good name!"

Long unused to any self-control, the piercing agony of her remorse and grief was terrible.

"To have died, would not have been much—what can I say?—I would have lived!" she cried. "I would have lived to be old, in the wretched streets—and to wander about, avoided, in the dark—and to see the day break on the ghastly line of houses, and remember how the same sun

used to shine into my room, and wake me once—I would have done even that to save her!"

Sinking on the stones, she took some in each hand, and clenched them up, as if she would have ground them. She writhed into some new posture constantly: stiffening her arms, twisting them before her face, as though to shut out from her eyes the little light there was, and drooping her head, as if it were heavy with insupportable recollections.

"What shall I ever do!" she said, fighting thus with her despair. "How can I go on as I am, a solitary curse to myself, a living disgrace to everyone I come near!" Suddenly she turned to my companion. "Stamp upon me, kill me! When she was your pride, you would have thought I had done her harm if I had brushed against her in the street. You can't believe—why should you?—a syllable that comes out of my lips. It would be a burning shame upon you, even now, if she and I exchanged a word. I don't complain. I don't say she and I are alike. I know there is a long, long way between us. I only say, with all my guilt and wretchedness upon my head, that I am grateful to her from my soul, and love her. Oh don't think that all the power I had of loving anything is quite worn out! Throw me away, as all the world does. Kill me for being what I am, and having ever known her; but don't think that of me!"

He looked upon her, while she made this supplication, in a wild distracted manner; and, when she was silent, gently raised her.

"Martha," said Mr. Peggotty, "God forbid as I should judge you. Forbid as I, of all men, should do that, my girl! You doen't know half the change that's come, in course of time, upon me, when you think it likely. Well!" he paused a moment, then went on. "You doen't understand how 'tis that this here gentleman and me has wished to speak to you. You doen't understand what 'tis we has afore us. Listen now!"

His influence upon her was complete. She stood, shrinkingly, before him, as if she were afraid to meet his eyes; but her passionate sorrow was quite hushed and mute.

"If you heerd," said Mr. Peggotty, "owt of what passed between Mas'r Davy and me, th' night when it snew so hard, you know as I have been—wheer not—fur to seek my

dear niece. My dear niece," he repeated steadily. "Fur she's more dear to me now, Martha, than ever she was dear afore."

She put her hands before her face; but otherwise remained quiet.

"I have heerd her tell," said Mr. Peggotty, "as you was early left fatherless and motherless, with no friend fur to take, in a rough seafaring way, their place. Maybe you can guess that if you'd had such a friend, you'd have got into a way of being fond of him in course of time, and that my niece was kiender daughter-like to me."

As she was silently trembling, he put her shawl carefully about her, taking it up from the ground for that purpose.

"Whereby," said he, "I know, both as she would go to the wureld's furdest end with me, if she could once see me again; and that she would fly to the wureld's furdest end to keep off seeing me. For though she ain't no call to doubt my love, and doen't—and doen't," he repeated, with a quiet assurance of the truth of what he said, "there's shame steps in, and keeps betwixt us."

I read, in every word of his plain impressive way of delivering himself, new evidence of his having thought of this one topic, in every feature it presented.

"According to our reckoning," he proceeded, "Mas'r Davy's here, and mine, she is like, one day, to make her own poor solitary course to London. We believe—Mas'r Davy, me, and all of us—that you are as innocent of everything that has befel her, as the unborn child. You've spoke of her being pleasant, kind, and gentle to you. Bless her, I knew she was! I knew she always was, to all. You're thankful to her, and you love her. Help us all you can to find her, and may Heaven reward you!"

She looked at him hastily, and for the first time, as if she were doubtful of what he had said.

"Will you trust me?" she asked, in a low voice of astonishment.

"Full and free!" said Mr. Peggotty.

"To speak to her, if I should ever find her; shelter her, if I have any shelter to divide with her; and then, without her knowledge, come to you, and bring you to her?" she asked hurriedly.

We both replied together, "Yes!"

She lifted up her eyes, and solemnly declared that she would devote herself to this task, fervently and faithfully. That she would never waver in it, never be diverted from it, never relinquish it, while there was any chance of hope. If she were not true to it, might the object she now had in life, which bound her to something devoid of evil, in its passing away from her, leave her more forlorn and more despairing, if that were possible, than she had been upon the river's brink that night; and then might all help, human and Divine, renounce her evermore!

She did not raise her voice above her breath, or address us, but said this to the night sky; then stood profoundly quiet, looking at the gloomy water.

We judged it expedient, now, to tell her all we knew; which I recounted at length. She listened with great attention, and with a face that often changed, but had the same purpose in all its varying expressions. Her eyes occasionally filled with tears, but those she repressed. It seemed as if her spirit were quite altered, and she could not be too quiet.

She asked, when all was told, where we were to be communicated with, if occasion should arise. Under a dull lamp in the road, I wrote our two addresses on a leaf of my pocket-book, which I tore out and gave to her, and which she put in her poor bosom. I asked her where she lived herself. She said, after a pause, in no place long. It were better not to know.

Mr. Peggotty suggesting to me, in a whisper, what had already occurred to myself, I took out my purse; but I could not prevail upon her to accept any money, nor could I exact any promise from her that she would do so at another time. I represented to her that Mr. Peggotty could not be called, for one in his condition, poor; and that the idea of her engaging in this search, while depending on her own resources, shocked us both. She continued steadfast. In this particular, his influence upon her was equally powerless with mine. She gratefully thanked him, but remained inexorable.

"There may be work to be got," she said. "I'll try."

"At least take some assistance," I returned, "until you have tried."

"I could not do what I have promised, for money," she replied. "I could not take it, if I was starving. To give

me money would be to take away your trust, to take away the object that you have given me, to take away the only certain thing that saves me from the river."

"In the name of the great Judge," said I, "before whom you and all of us must stand at His dread time, dismiss that terrible idea! We can all do some good, if we will."

She trembled, and her lip shook, and her face was paler, as she answered:

"It has been put in your hearts, perhaps, to save a wretched creature for repentance. I am afraid to think so; it seems too bold. If any good should come of me, I might begin to hope; for nothing but harm has ever come of my deeds yet. I am to be trusted, for the first time in a long while, with my miserable life, on account of what you have given me to try for. I know no more, and I can say no more."

Again she repressed the tears that had begun to flow; and, putting out her trembling hand, and touching Mr. Peggotty, as if there were some healing virtue in him, went away along the desolate road. She had been ill, probably for a long time. I observed, upon that closer opportunity of observation, that she was worn and haggard, and that her sunken eyes expressed privation and endurance.

We followed her at a short distance, our way lying in the same direction, until we came back into the lighted and populous streets. I had such implicit confidence in her declaration, that I then put it to Mr. Peggotty, whether it would not seem, in the onset, like distrusting her, to follow her any further. He being of the same mind, and equally reliant on her, we suffered her to take her own road, and took ours, which was towards Highgate. He accompanied me a good part of the way; and when we parted, with a prayer for the success of this fresh effort, there was a new and thoughtful compassion in him that I was at no loss to interpret.

It was midnight when I arrived at home. I had reached my own gate, and was standing listening for the deep bell of Saint Paul's, the sound of which I thought had been borne towards me among the multitude of striking clocks, when I was rather surprised to see that the door of my aunt's cottage was open, and that a faint light in the entry was shining out across the road.

Thinking that my aunt might have relapsed into one of

her old alarms, and might be watching the progress of some imaginary conflagration in the distance, I went to speak to her. It was with very great surprise that I saw a man standing in her little garden.

He had a glass and bottle in his hand, and was in the act of drinking. I stopped short, among the thick foliage outside, for the moon was up now, though obscured; and I recognised the man whom I had once supposed to be a delusion of Mr. Dick's, and had once encountered with my aunt in the streets of the City.

He was eating as well as drinking, and seemed to eat with a hungry appetite. He seemed curious regarding the cottage, too, as if it were the first time he had seen it. After stooping to put the bottle on the ground, he looked up at the windows, and looked about; though with a covert and impatient air, as if he was anxious to be gone.

The light in the passage was obscured for a moment, and my aunt came out. She was agitated, and told some money into his hand. I heard it chink.

"What's the use of this?" he demanded.

"I can spare no more," returned my aunt.

"Then I can't go," said he. "Here! You may take it back!"

"You bad man," returned my aunt, with great emotion; "how can you use me so? But why do I ask? It is because you know how weak I am! What have I to do, to free myself for ever of your visits, but to abandon you to your deserts?"

"And why don't you abandon me to my deserts?" said he.

"*You* ask me why!" returned my aunt. "What a heart you must have!"

He stood moodily rattling the money, and shaking his head, until at length he said:

"Is this all you mean to give me, then?"

"It is all I *can* give you," said my aunt. "You know I have had losses, and am poorer than I used to be. I have told you so. Having got it, why do you give me the pain of looking at you for another moment, and seeing what you have become?"

"I have become shabby enough, if you mean that," he said. "I lead the life of an owl."

"You stripped me of the greater part of all I ever had,"

said my aunt. "You closed my heart against the whole world, years and years. You treated me falsely, ungratefully, and cruelly. Go, and repent of it. Don't add new injuries to the long, long list of injuries you have done me!"

"Ay!" he returned. "It's all very fine!—Well! I must do the best I can, for the present, I suppose."

In spite of himself, he appeared abashed by my aunt's indignant tears, and came slouching out of the garden. Taking two or three quick steps, as if I had just come up, I met him at the gate, and went in as he came out. We eyed one another narrowly in passing, and with no favour.

"Aunt," said I, hurriedly. "This man alarming you again! Let me speak to him. Who is he?"

"Child," returned my aunt, taking my arm, "come in, and don't speak to me for ten minutes."

We sat down in her little parlour. My aunt retired behind the round green fan of former days, which was screwed on the back of a chair, and occasionally wiped her eyes, for about a quarter of an hour. Then she came out, and took a seat beside me.

"Trot," said my aunt, calmly, "it's my husband."

"Your husband, aunt? I thought he had been dead!"

"Dead to me," returned my aunt, "but living."

I sat in silent amazement.

"Betsey Trotwood don't look a likely subject for the tender passion," said my aunt, composedly, "but the time was, Trot, when she believed in that man most entirely. When she loved him, Trot, right well. When there was no proof of attachment and affection that she would not have given him. He repaid her by breaking her fortune, and nearly breaking her heart. So she put all that sort of sentiment, once and for ever, in a grave, and filled it up, and flattened it down."

"My dear, good aunt!"

"I left him," my aunt proceeded, laying her hand as usual on the back of mine, "generously. I may say at this distance of time, Trot, that I left him generously. He had been so cruel to me, that I might have effected a separation on easy terms for myself; but I did not. He soon made ducks and drakes of what I gave him, sank lower and lower, married another woman, I believe, became an adventurer, a gambler, and a cheat. What he is now, you see. But he was a fine-looking man when I married him," said my aunt,

with an echo of her old pride and admiration in her tone; "and I believed him—I was a fool!—to be the soul of honour!"

She gave my hand a squeeze, and shook her head.

"He is nothing to me now, Trot,—less than nothing. But, sooner than have him punished for his offences (as he would be if he prowled about in this country), I give him more money than I can afford, at intervals when he reappears, to go away. I was a fool when I married him; and I am so far an incurable fool on that subject, that, for the sake of what I once believed him to be, I wouldn't have even this shadow of my idle fancy hardly dealt with. For I was in earnest, Trot, if ever a woman was."

My aunt dismissed the matter with a heavy sigh, and smoothed her dress.

"There, my dear!" she said. "Now, you know the beginning, middle, and end, and all about it. We won't mention the subject to one another any more; neither, of course, will you mention it to anybody else. This is my grumpy, frumpy story, and we'll keep it to ourselves, Trot!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

DOMESTIC.

I LABOURED hard at my book, without allowing it to interfere with the punctual discharge of my newspaper duties; and it came out and was very successful. I was not stunned by the praise which sounded in my ears, notwithstanding that I was keenly alive to it, and thought better of my own performance, I have little doubt, than anybody else did. It has always been in my observation of human nature, that a man who has any good reason to believe in himself never flourishes himself before the faces of other people in order that they may believe in him. For this reason, I retained my modesty in very self-respect; and the more praise I got, the more I tried to deserve.

It is not my purpose, in this record, though in all other essentials it is my written memory, to pursue the history of

my own fictions. They express themselves, and I leave them to themselves. When I refer to them, incidentally, it is only as a part of my progress.

Having some foundation for believing, by this time, that nature and accident had made me an author, I pursued my vocation with confidence. Without such assurance I should certainly have left it alone, and bestowed my energy on some other endeavour. I should have tried to find out what nature and accident really had made me, and to be that, and nothing else.

I had been writing, in the newspaper and elsewhere, so prosperously, that when my new success was achieved, I considered myself reasonably entitled to escape from the dreary debates. One joyful night, therefore, I noted down the music of the parliamentary bagpipes for the last time, and I have never heard it since; though I still recognise the old drone in the newspapers, without any substantial variation (except, perhaps, that there is more of it) all the livelong session.

I now write of the time when I had been married, I suppose, about a year and a half. After several varieties of experiment, we had given up the housekeeping as a bad job. The house kept itself, and we kept a page. The principal function of this retainer was to quarrel with the cook; in which respect he was a perfect Whittington, without his cat, or the remotest chance of being made Lord Mayor.

He appears to me to have lived in a hail of saucepan-lids. His whole existence was a scuffle. He would shriek for help on the most improper occasions,—as, when we had a little dinner-party, or a few friends in the evening,—and would come tumbling out of the kitchen, with iron missiles flying after him. We wanted to get rid of him, but he was very much attached to us, and wouldn't go. He was a tearful boy, and broke into such deplorable lamentations, when a cessation of our connexion was hinted at, that we were obliged to keep him. He had no mother—no anything in the way of a relative, that I could discover, except a sister, who fled to America the moment we had taken him off her hands; and he became quartered on us like a horrible young changeling. He had a lively perception of his own unfortunate state, and was always rubbing his eyes with the sleeve of his jacket, or stooping to blow his nose on the extreme corner of a little pocket-handkerchief, which he never *would*

take completely out of his pocket, but always economised and secreted.

This unlucky page, engaged in an evil hour, at six pounds ten per annum, was a source of continual trouble to me. I watched him as he grew—and he grew like scarlet beans—with painful apprehensions of the time when he would begin to shave; even of the days when he would be bald or grey. I saw no prospect of ever getting rid of him; and, projecting myself into the future, used to think what an inconvenience he would be when he was an old man.

I never expected anything less, than this unfortunate's manner of getting me out of my difficulty. He stole Dora's watch, which, like everything else belonging to us, had no particular place of its own; and, converting it into money, spent the produce (he was always a weak-minded boy) in incessantly riding up and down between London and Uxbridge outside the coach. He was taken to Bow Street, as well as I remember, on the completion of his fifteenth journey; when four-and-sixpence, and a second-hand fife which he couldn't play, were found upon his person.

The surprise and its consequences would have been much less disagreeable to me if he had not been penitent. But he was very penitent indeed, and in a peculiar way—not in the lump, but by instalments. For example; the day after that on which I was obliged to appear against him, he made certain revelations touching a hamper in the cellar, which we believed to be full of wine, but which had nothing in it except bottles and corks. We supposed he had now eased his mind, and told the worst he knew of the cook; but, a day or two afterwards, his conscience sustained a new twinge, and he disclosed how she had a little girl, who, early every morning, took away our bread; and also how he himself had been suborned to maintain the milkman in coals. In two or three days more, I was informed by the authorities of his having led to the discovery of sirloins of beef among the kitchen-stuff, and sheets in the rag-bag. A little while afterwards, he broke out in an entirely new direction, and confessed to a knowledge of burglarious intentions as to our premises, on the part of the pot-boy, who was immediately taken up. I got to be so ashamed of being such a victim, that I would have given him any money to hold his tongue, or would have offered a round bribe for his being permitted to run away. It was an aggravating cir-

cumstance in the case that he had no idea of this, but conceived that he was making me amends in every new discovery: not to say, heaping obligations on my head.

At last I ran away myself, whenever I saw an emissary of the police approaching with some new intelligence; and lived a stealthy life until he was tried and ordered to be transported. Even then he couldn't be quiet, but was always writing us letters; and wanted so much to see Dora before he went away, that Dora went to visit him, and fainted when she found herself inside the iron bars. In short, I had no peace of my life until he was expatriated, and made (as I afterwards heard) a shepherd of, "up the country" somewhere; I have no geographical idea where.

All this led me into some serious reflections, and presented our mistakes in a new aspect; as I could not help communicating to Dora one evening, in spite of my tenderness for her.

"My love," said I, "it is very painful to me to think that our want of system and management, involves not only ourselves (which we have got used to), but other people."

"You have been silent for a long time, and now you are going to be cross!" said Dora.

"No, my dear, indeed! Let me explain to you what I mean."

"I think I don't want to know," said Dora.

"But I want you to know, my love. Put Jip down."

Dora put his nose to mine, and said "Boh!" to drive my seriousness away; but, not succeeding, ordered him into his pagoda, and sat looking at me, with her hands folded, and a most resigned little expression of countenance.

"The fact is, my dear," I began, "there is contagion in us. We infect everyone about us."

I might have gone on in this figurative manner, if Dora's face had not admonished me that she was wondering with all her might whether I was going to propose any new kind of vaccination, or other medical remedy, for this unwholesome state of ours. Therefore I checked myself, and made my meaning plainer.

"It is not merely, my pet," said I, "that we lose money and comfort, and even temper sometimes, by not learning to be more careful; but that we incur the serious responsibility of spoiling everyone who comes into our service, or has any dealings with us. I begin to be afraid that the

fault is not entirely on one side, but that these people all turn out ill because we don't turn out very well ourselves."

"Oh, what an accusation," exclaimed Dora, opening her eyes wide; "to say that you ever saw me take gold watches! Oh!"

"My dearest," I remonstrated, "don't talk preposterous nonsense! Who has made the least allusion to gold watches?"

"You did," returned Dora. "You know you did. You said I hadn't turned out well, and compared me to him."

"To whom?" I asked.

"To the page," sobbed Dora. "Oh, you cruel fellow, to compare your affectionate wife to a transported page! Why didn't you tell me your opinion of me before we were married? Why didn't you say, you hard-hearted thing, that you were convinced I was worse than a transported page? Oh, what a dreadful opinion to have of me! Oh, my goodness!"

"Now, Dora, my love," I returned, gently trying to remove the handkerchief she pressed to her eyes, "this is not only very ridiculous of you, but very wrong. In the first place, it's not true."

"You always said he was a story-teller," sobbed Dora. "And now you say the same of me! Oh, what shall I do! What shall I do!"

"My darling girl," I retorted, "I really must entreat you to be reasonable, and listen to what I did say, and do say. My dear Dora, unless we learn to do our duty to those whom we employ, they will never learn to do their duty to us. I am afraid we present opportunities to people to do wrong, that never ought to be presented. Even if we were as lax as we are, in all our arrangements, by choice—which we are not—even if we liked it, and found it agreeable to be so—which we don't—I am persuaded we should have no right to go on in this way. We are positively corrupting people. We are bound to think of that. I can't help thinking of it, Dora. It is a reflection I am unable to dismiss, and it sometimes makes me very uneasy. There, dear, that's all. Come now! Don't be foolish!"

Dora would not allow me, for a long time, to remove the handkerchief. She sat sobbing and murmuring behind it, that, if I was uneasy, why had I ever been married? Why hadn't I said, even the day before we went to church, that

I knew I should be uneasy, and I would rather not? If I couldn't bear her, why didn't I send her away to her aunts at Putney, or to Julia Mills in India? Julia would be glad to see her, and would not call her a transported page; Julia never had called her anything of the sort. In short, Dora was so afflicted, and so afflicted me by being in that condition, that I felt it was of no use repeating this kind of effort, though never so mildly, and I must take some other course.

What other course was left to take! To "form her mind?" This was a common phrase of words which had a fair and promising sound, and I resolved to form Dora's mind.

I began immediately. When Dora was very childish, and I would have infinitely preferred to humour her, I tried to be grave—and disconcerted her, and myself too. I talked to her on the subjects which occupied my thoughts; and I read Shakespeare to her—and fatigued her to the last degree. I accustomed myself to giving her, as it were quite casually, little scraps of useful information, or sound opinion—and she started from them when I let them off, as if they had been crackers. No matter how incidentally or naturally I endeavoured to form my little wife's mind, I could not help seeing that she always had an instinctive perception of what I was about, and became a prey to the keenest apprehension. In particular, it was clear to me, that she thought Shakespeare a terrible fellow. The formation went on very slowly.

I pressed Traddles into the service without his knowledge; and whenever he came to see us, exploded my mines upon him for the edification of Dora at second hand. The amount of practical wisdom I bestowed upon Traddles in this manner was immense, and of the best quality; but it had no other effect upon Dora than to depress her spirits, and make her always nervous with the dread that it would be her turn next. I found myself in the condition of a schoolmaster, a trap, a pitfall; of always playing spider to Dora's fly, and always pouncing out of my hole to her infinite disturbance.

Still, looking forward through this intermediate stage, to the time when there should be a perfect sympathy between Dora and me, and when I should have "formed her mind" to my entire satisfaction, I persevered, even for months.

Finding at last, however, that, although I had been all this time a very porcupine or hedgehog, bristling all over with determination, I had effected nothing, it began to occur to me that perhaps Dora's mind was already formed.

On farther consideration this appeared so likely, that I abandoned my scheme, which had had a more promising appearance in words than in action; resolving henceforth to be satisfied with my child-wife, and to try to change her into nothing else by any process. I was heartily tired of being sagacious and prudent by myself, and of seeing my darling under restraint; so, I bought a pretty pair of ear-rings for her, and a collar for Jip, and went home one day to make myself agreeable.

Dora was delighted with the little presents, and kissed me joyfully; but, there was a shadow between us, however slight, and I had made up my mind that it should not be there. If there must be such a shadow anywhere, I would keep it for the future in my own breast.

I sat down by my wife on the sofa, and put the ear-rings in her ears; and then I told her that I feared we had not been quite as good company lately, as we used to be, and that the fault was mine. Which I sincerely felt, and which indeed it was.

"The truth is, Dora, my life," I said; "I have been trying to be wise."

"And to make me wise too," said Dora, timidly. "Haven't you, Doady?"

I nodded assent to the pretty inquiry of the raised eyebrows, and kissed the parted lips.

"It's of not a bit of use," said Dora, shaking her head, until the ear-rings rang again. "You know what a little thing I am, and what I wanted you to call me from the first. If you can't do so, I am afraid you'll never like me. Are you sure you don't think, sometimes, it would have been better to have——"

"Done what, my dear?" For she made no effort to proceed.

"Nothing!" said Dora.

"Nothing?" I repeated.

She put her arms round my neck, and laughed, and called herself by her favourite name of a goose, and hid her face on my shoulder in such a profusion of curls that it was quite a task to clear them away and see it.

"Don't I think it would have been better to have done nothing, than to have tried to form my little wife's mind?" said I, laughing at myself. "Is that the question? Yes, indeed, I do."

"Is that what you have been trying?" cried Dora. "Oh, what a shocking boy!"

"But I shall never try any more," said I. "For I love her dearly as she is."

"Without a story—really?" inquired Dora, creeping closer to me.

"Why should I seek to change," said I, "what has been so precious to me for so long! You never can show better than as your own natural self, my sweet Dora; and we'll try no conceited experiments, but go back to our old way, and be happy."

"And be happy!" returned Dora. "Yes! All day! And you won't mind things going a tiny morsel wrong, sometimes?"

"No, no," said I. "We must do the best we can."

"And you won't tell me, any more, that we make other people bad," coaxed Dora; "will you? Because you know it's so dreadfully cross."

"No, no," said I.

"It's better for me to be stupid than uncomfortable, isn't it?" said Dora.

"Better to be naturally Dora than anything else in the world."

"In the world! Ah, Doady, it's a large place!"

She shook her head, turned her delighted bright eyes up to mine, kissed me, broke into a merry laugh, and sprang away to put on Jip's new collar.

So ended my last attempt to make any change in Dora. I had been unhappy in trying it; I could not endure my own solitary wisdom; I could not reconcile it with her former appeal to me as my child-wife. I resolved to do what I could, in a quiet way, to improve our proceedings myself; but, I foresaw that my utmost would be very little, or I must degenerate into the spider again, and be for ever lying in wait.

And the shadow I have mentioned, that was not to be between us any more, but was to rest wholly on my own heart? How did that fall?

The old unhappy feeling pervaded my life. It was deep-

ened, if it were changed at all; but it was as undefined as ever, and addressed me like a strain of sorrowful music faintly heard in the night. I loved my wife dearly, and I was happy; but the happiness I had vaguely anticipated, once, was not the happiness I enjoyed, and there was always something wanting.

In fulfilment of the compact I have made with myself, to reflect my mind on this paper, I again examine it, closely, and bring its secrets to the light. What I missed, I still regarded—I always regarded—as something that had been a dream of my youthful fancy; that was incapable of realisation; that I was now discovering to be so, with some natural pain, as all men did. But, that it would have been better for me if my wife could have helped me more, and shared the many thoughts in which I had no partner; and that this might have been; I knew.

Between these two irreconcilable conclusions: the one, that what I felt was general and unavoidable; the other, that it was particular to me, and might have been different: I balanced curiously, with no distinct sense of their opposition to each other. When I thought of the airy dreams of youth that are incapable of realisation, I thought of the better state preceding manhood that I had outgrown; and then the contented days with Agnes, in the dear old house, arose before me, like spectres of the dead, that might have some renewal in another world, but never, never more could be reanimated here.

Sometimes, the speculation came into my thoughts, What might have happened, or what would have happened, if Dora and I had never known each other? But, she was so incorporated with my existence, that it was the idlest of all fancies, and would soon rise out of my reach and sight, like gossamer floating in the air.

I always loved her. What I am describing, slumbered, and half awoke, and slept again, in the innermost recesses of my mind. There was no evidence of it in me; I know of no influence it had in anything I said or did. I bore the weight of all our little cares, and all my projects; Dora held the pens; and we both felt that our shares were adjusted as the case required. She was truly fond of me, and proud of me; and when Agnes wrote a few earnest words in her letters to Dora, of the pride and interest with which my old friends heard of my growing reputation, and

read my book as if they heard me speaking its contents, Dora read them out to me with tears of joy in her bright eyes, and said I was a dear old clever, famous boy.

"The first mistaken impulse of an undisciplined heart." Those words of Mrs. Strong's were constantly recurring to me, at this time; were almost always present to my mind. I awoke with them, often, in the night; I remember to have even read them, in dreams, inscribed upon the walls of houses. For I knew, now, that my own heart was undisciplined when it first loved Dora; and that if it had been disciplined, it never could have felt, when we were married, what it had felt in its secret experience.

"There can be no disparity in marriage, like unsuitability of mind and purpose." Those words I remembered too. I had endeavoured to adapt Dora to myself, and found it impracticable. It remained for me to adapt myself to Dora; to share with her what I could, and be happy; to bear on my own shoulders what I must, and be happy still. This was the discipline to which I tried to bring my heart, when I began to think. It made my second year much happier than my first; and, what was better still, made Dora's life all sunshine.

But, as that year wore on, Dora was not strong. I had hoped that lighter hands than mine would help to mould her character, and that a baby-smile upon her breast might change my child-wife to a woman. It was not to be. The spirit fluttered for a moment on the threshold of its little prison, and, unconscious of captivity, took wing.

"When I can run about again, as I used to do, aunt," said Dora, "I shall make Jip race. He is getting quite slow and lazy."

"I suspect, my dear," said my aunt, quietly working by her side, "he has a worse disorder than that. Age, Dora."

"Do you think he is old?" said Dora, astonished. "Oh, how strange it seems that Jip should be old!"

"It's a complaint we are all liable to, Little One, as we get on in life," said my aunt, cheerfully; "I don't feel more free from it than I used to be, I assure you."

"But Jip," said Dora, looking at him with compassion, "even little Jip! Oh, poor fellow!"

"I dare say he'll last a long time yet, Blossom," said my aunt, patting Dora on the cheek, as she leaned out of her couch to look at Jip, who responded by standing on his

hind-legs, and baulking himself in various asthmatic attempts to scramble up by the head and shoulders. "He must have a piece of flannel in his house this winter, and I shouldn't wonder if he came out quite fresh again, with the flowers in the spring. Bless the little dog!" exclaimed my aunt, "if he had as many lives as a cat, and was on the point of losing 'em all, he'd bark at me with his last breath, I believe!"

Dora had helped him up on the sofa; where he really was defying my aunt to such a furious extent, that he couldn't keep straight, but barked himself sideways. The more my aunt looked at him, the more he reproached her; for, she had lately taken to spectacles, and for some inscrutable reason he considered the glasses personal.

Dora made him lie down by her, with a good deal of persuasion; and when he was quiet, drew one of his long ears through and through her hand, repeating thoughtfully, "Even little Jip! Oh, poor fellow!"

"His lungs are good enough," said my aunt, gaily, "and his dislikes are not at all feeble. He has a good many years before him, no doubt. But if you want a dog to race with, Little Blossom, he has lived too well for that, and I'll give you one."

"Thank you, aunt," said Dora, faintly. "But don't, please!"

"No?" said my aunt, taking off her spectacles.

"I couldn't have any other dog but Jip," said Dora. "It would be so unkind to Jip! Besides, I couldn't be such friends with any other dog but Jip; because he wouldn't have known me before I was married, and wouldn't have barked at Doady when he first came to our house. I couldn't care for any other dog but Jip, I am afraid, aunt."

"To be sure!" said my aunt, patting her cheek again. "You are right."

"You are not offended," said Dora. "Are you?"

"Why, what a sensitive pet it is!" cried my aunt, bending over her affectionately. "To think that I could be offended!"

"No, no, I didn't really think so," returned Dora; "but I am a little tired, and it made me silly for a moment—I am always a silly little thing, you know; but it made me more silly—to talk about Jip. He has known me in all that

has happened to me, haven't you, Jip? And I couldn't bear to slight him, because he was a little altered—could I, Jip?"

Jip nestled closer to his mistress, and lazily licked her hand.

"You are not so old, Jip, are you, that you'll leave your mistress yet?" said Dora. "We may keep one another company, a little longer!"

My pretty Dora! When she came down to dinner on the ensuing Sunday, and was so glad to see old Traddles (who always dined with us on Sunday), we thought she would be "running about as she used to do," in a few days. But they said, wait a few days more; and then, wait a few days more; and still she neither ran nor walked. She looked very pretty, and was very merry; but the little feet that used to be so nimble when they danced round Jip, were dull and motionless.

I began to carry her downstairs every morning, and upstairs every night. She would clasp me round the neck and laugh, the while, as if I did it for a wager. Jip would bark and caper round us, and go on before, and look back on the landing, breathing short, to see that we were coming. My aunt, the best and most cheerful of nurses, would trudge after us, a moving mass of shawls and pillows. Mr. Dick would not have relinquished his post of candle-bearer to any one alive. Traddles would be often at the bottom of the staircase, looking on, and taking charge of sportive messages from Dora to the dearest girl in the world. We made quite a gay procession of it, and my child-wife was the gayest there.

But, sometimes, when I took her up, and felt that she was lighter in my arms, a dead blank feeling came upon me, as if I were approaching to some frozen region yet unseen, that numbed my life. I avoided the recognition of this feeling by any name, or by any communing with myself; until one night, when it was very strong upon me, and my aunt had left her with a parting cry of "Good night, Little Blossom," I sat down at my desk alone, and cried to think, Oh what a fatal name it was, and how the blossom withered in its bloom upon the tree!

CHAPTER XLIX.

I AM INVOLVED IN MYSTERY.

I RECEIVED one morning by the post, the following letter, dated Canterbury, and addressed to me at Doctors' Commons; which I read with some surprise:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Circumstances beyond my individual control have, for a considerable lapse of time, effected a severance of that intimacy which, in the limited opportunities conceded to me in the midst of my professional duties, of contemplating the scenes and events of the past, tinged by the prismatic hues of memory, has ever afforded me, as it ever must continue to afford, gratifying emotions of no common description. This fact, my dear Sir, combined with the distinguished elevation to which your talents have raised you, deters me from presuming to aspire to the liberty of addressing the companion of my youth, by the familiar appellation of Copperfield! It is sufficient to know that the name to which I do myself the honour to refer will ever be treasured among the muniments of our house (I allude to the archives connected with our former lodgers, preserved by Mrs. Micawber), with sentiments of personal esteem amounting to affection.

"It is not for one situated, through his original errors and a fortuitous combination of unpropitious events, as is the foundered Bark (if he may be allowed to assume so maritime a denomination), who now takes up the pen to address you—it is not, I repeat, for one so circumstanced, to adopt the language of compliment, or of congratulation. That, he leaves to abler and to purer hands.

"If your more important avocations should admit of your ever tracing these imperfect characters thus far—which may be, or may not be, as circumstances arise—you will naturally inquire by what object am I influenced, then, in inditing the present missive? Allow me to say that I fully defer to the reasonable character of that inquiry, and proceed to develop it; premising that it is *not* an object of a pecuniary nature.

"Without more directly referring to any latent ability that may possibly exist on my part, of wielding the thunderbolt, or directing the devouring and avenging flame in any quarter, I may be permitted to observe, in passing, that my brightest visions are for ever dispelled—that my peace is shattered and my power of enjoyment destroyed—that my heart is no longer in the right place—and that I no more walk erect before my fellow-man. The canker is in the flower. The cup is bitter to the brim. The worm is at his work, and will soon dispose of his victim. The sooner the better. But I will not digress.

"Placed in a mental position of peculiar painfulness, beyond the assuaging reach even of Mrs. Micawber's influence, though exercised in the tripartite character of woman, wife, and mother, it is my intention to fly from myself for a short period, and devote a respite of eight-and-forty hours to revisiting some metropolitan scenes of past enjoyment. Among other havens of domestic tranquillity and peace of mind, my feet will naturally tend towards the King's Bench Prison. In stating that I shall be (D.V.) on the outside of the south wall of that place of incarceration on civil process, the day after to-morrow, at seven in the evening, precisely, my object in this epistolary communication is accomplished.

"I do not feel warranted in soliciting my former friend Mr. Copperfield, or my former friend Mr. Thomas Traddles of the Inner Temple, if that gentleman is still existent and forthcoming, to condescend to meet me, and renew (so far as may be) our past relations of the olden time. I confine myself to throwing out the observation, that, at the hour and place I have indicated, may be found such ruined vestiges as yet

"Remain,
"Of
"A
"Fallen Tower,
"WILKINS MICAWBER.

"P.S. It may be advisable to superadd to the above, the statement that Mrs. Micawber is *not* in confidential possession of my intentions."

I read the letter over, several times. Making due allowance for Mr. Micawber's lofty style of composition, and for the extraordinary relish with which he sat down and wrote

long letters on all possible and impossible occasions, I still believed that something important lay hidden at the bottom of this roundabout communication. I put it down, to think about it; and took it up again, to read it once more; and was still pursuing it, when Traddles found me in the height of my perplexity.

"My dear fellow, said I, "I never was better pleased to see you. You come to give me the benefit of your sober judgment at a most opportune time. I have received a very singular letter, Traddles, from Mr. Micawber."

"No?" cried Traddles. "You don't say so? And I have received one from Mrs. Micawber!"

With that, Traddles, who was flushed with walking, and whose hair, under the combined effects of exercise and excitement, stood on end as if he saw a cheerful ghost, produced his letter and made an exchange with me. I watched him into the heart of Mr. Micawber's letter, and returned the elevation of eyebrows with which he said "'Wielding the thunderbolt, or directing the devouring and avenging flame!' Bless me, Copperfield!"—and then entered on the perusal of Mrs. Micawber's epistle.

It ran thus:—

"My best regards to Mr. Thomas Traddles, and if he should still remember one who formerly had the happiness of being well acquainted with him, may I beg a few moments of his leisure time? I assure Mr. T. T. that I would not intrude upon his kindness, were I in any other position than on the confines of distraction.

"Though harrowing to myself to mention, the alienation of Mr. Micawber (formerly so domesticated) from his wife and family, is the cause of my addressing my unhappy appeal to Mr. Traddles, and soliciting his best indulgence. Mr. T. can form no adequate idea of the change in Mr. Micawber's conduct, of his wildness, of his violence. It has gradually augmented, until it assumes the appearance of aberration of intellect. Scarcely a day passes, I assure Mr. Traddles, on which some paroxysm does not take place. Mr. T. will not require me to depict my feelings, when I inform him that I have become accustomed to hear Mr. Micawber assert that he has sold himself to the D. Mystery and secrecy have long been his principal characteristic, have long replaced unlimited confidence. The

slightest provocation, even being asked if there is anything he would prefer for dinner, causes him to express a wish for a separation. Last night, on being childishly solicited for two-pence, to buy 'lemon-stunners'—a local sweetmeat—he presented an oyster-knife at the twins!

"I entreat Mr. Traddles to bear with me in entering into these details. Without them, Mr. T. would indeed find it difficult to form the faintest conception of my heartrending situation.

"May I now venture to confide to Mr. T. the purport of my letter? Will he now allow me to throw myself on his friendly consideration? Oh yes, for I know his heart!

"The quick eye of affection is not easily blinded, when of the female sex. Mr. Micawber is going to London. Though he studiously concealed his hand, this morning before breakfast, in writing the direction-card which he attached to the little brown valise of happier days, the eagle-glance of matrimonial anxiety detected d, o, n, distinctly traced. The West-End destination of the coach, is the Golden Cross. Dare I fervently implore Mr. T. to see my misguided husband, and to reason with him? Dare I ask Mr. T. to endeavor to step in between Mr. Micawber and his agonised family? Oh no, for that would be too much!

"If Mr. Copperfield should yet remember one unknown to fame, will Mr. T. take charge of my unalterable regards and similar entreaties? In any case, he will have the benevolence *to consider this communication strictly private, and on no account whatever to be alluded to, however distantly, in the presence of Mr. Micawber.* If Mr. T. should ever reply to it (which I cannot but feel to be *most* improbable), a letter addressed to M. E., Post Office, Canterbury, will be fraught with less painful consequences than any addressed immediately to one who subscribes herself, in extreme distress,

"Mr. Thomas Traddles's respectful friend and suppliant,

"EMMA MICAWBER."

"What do you think of that letter?" said Traddles, casting his eyes upon me, when I had read it twice.

"What do you think of the other?" said I. For he was still reading it with knitted brows.

"I think that the two together, Copperfield," replied

Traddles, "mean more than Mr. and Mrs. Micawber usually mean in their correspondence—but I don't know what. They are both written in good faith, I have no doubt, and without any collusion. Poor thing!" he was now alluding to Mrs. Micawber's letter, and we were standing side by side comparing the two; "it will be a charity to write to her, at all events, and tell her that we will not fail to see Mr. Micawber."

I acceded to this, the more readily, because I now reproached myself with having treated her former letter rather lightly. It had set me thinking a good deal at the time, as I have mentioned in its place; but my absorption in my own affairs, my experience of the family, and my hearing nothing more, had gradually ended in my dismissing the subject. I had often thought of the Micawbers, but chiefly to wonder what "pecuniary liabilities" they were establishing in Canterbury, and to recall how shy Mr. Micawber was of me when he became clerk to Uriah Heep.

However, I now wrote a comforting letter to Mrs. Micawber, in our joint names, and we both signed it. As we walked into town to post it, Traddles and I held a long conference, and launched into a number of speculations, which I need not repeat. We took my aunt into our counsels in the afternoon; but our only decided conclusion was, that we would be very punctual in keeping Mr. Micawber's appointment.

Although we appeared at the stipulated place a quarter of an hour before the time, we found Mr. Micawber already there. He was standing with his arms folded, over against the wall, looking at the spikes on the top, with a sentimental expression, as if they were the interlacing boughs of trees that had shaded him in his youth.

When we accosted him, his manner was something more confused, and something less genteel, than of yore. He had relinquished his legal suit of black for the purposes of this excursion, and wore the old surtout and tights, but not quite with the old air. He gradually picked up more and more of it as we conversed with him; but, his very eyeglass seemed to hang less easily, and his shirt-collar, though still of the old formidable dimensions, rather drooped.

"Gentlemen!" said Mr. Micawber, after the first salu-

tations, "you are friends in need, and friends indeed. Allow me to offer my inquiries with reference to the physical welfare of Mrs. Copperfield *in esse*, and Mrs. Traddles *in posse*,—presuming, that is to say, that my friend Mr. Traddles is not yet united to the object of his affections, for weal and for woe."

We acknowledged his politeness, and made suitable replies. He then directed our attention to the wall, and was beginning, "I assure you, gentlemen," when I ventured to object to that ceremonious form of address, and to beg that he would speak to us in the old way.

"My dear Copperfield," he returned, pressing my hand, "your cordiality overpowers me. This reception of a shattered fragment of the Temple once called Man—if I may be permitted so to express myself—bespeaks a heart that is an honour to our common nature. I was about to observe that I again behold the serene spot where some of the happiest hours of my existence fleeted by."

"Made so, I am sure, by Mrs. Micawber," said I. "I hope she is well?"

"Thank you," returned Mr. Micawber, whose face clouded at this reference, "she is but so-so. And this," said Mr. Micawber, nodding his head sorrowfully, "is the Bench! Where, for the first time in many revolving years, the overwhelming pressure of pecuniary liabilities was not proclaimed, from day to day, by importunate voices declining to vacate the passage; where there was no knocker on the door for any creditor to appeal to; where personal service of process was not required, and detainers were merely lodged at the gate! Gentlemen," said Mr. Micawber, "when the shadow of that ironwork on the summit of the brick structure has been reflected on the gravel of the Parade, I have seen my children thread the mazes of the intricate pattern, avoiding the dark marks. I have been familiar with every stone in the place. If I betray weakness, you will know how to excuse me."

"We have all got on in life since then, Mr. Micawber," said I.

"Mr. Copperfield," returned Mr. Micawber, bitterly, "when I was an inmate of that retreat I could look my fellow-man in the face, and punch his head if he offended me. My fellow-man and myself are no longer on those glorious terms!"

Turning from the building in a downcast manner, Mr. Micawber accepted my proffered arm on one side, and the proffered arm of Traddles on the other, and walked away between us.

"There are some landmarks," observed Mr. Micawber, looking fondly back over his shoulder, "on the road to the tomb, which, but for the impiety of the aspiration, a man would wish never to have passed. Such is the Bench in my chequered career."

"Oh, you are in low spirits, Mr. Micawber," said Traddles.

"I am, Sir," interposed Mr. Micawber.

"I hope," said Traddles, "it is not because you have conceived a dislike to the law—for I am a lawyer myself, you know."

Mr. Micawber answered not a word.

"How is our friend, Heep, Mr. Micawber?" said I, after a silence.

"My dear Copperfield," returned Mr. Micawber, bursting into a state of much excitement, and turning pale, "if you ask after my employer as *your* friend, I am sorry for it; if you ask after him as *my* friend, I sardonically smile at it. In whatever capacity you ask after my employer, I beg, without offence to you, to limit my reply to this—that whatever his state of health may be, his appearance is foxy: not to say diabolical. You will allow me, as a private individual, to decline pursuing a subject which has lashed me to the utmost verge of desperation in my professional capacity."

I expressed my regret for having innocently touched upon a theme that roused him so much. "May I ask," said I, "without any hazard of repeating the mistake, how my old friends Mr. and Miss Wickfield are?"

"Miss Wickfield," said Mr. Micawber, now turning red, "is, as she always is, a pattern, and a bright example. My dear Copperfield, she is the only starry spot in a miserable existence. My respect for that young lady, my admiration of her character, my devotion to her for her love and truth, and goodness!—Take me," said Mr. Micawber, "down a turning, for, upon my soul, in my present state of mind I am not equal to this!"

We wheeled him off into a narrow street, where he took out his pocket-handkerchief, and stood with his back to a

wall. If I looked as gravely at him as Traddles did, he must have found our company by no means inspiriting.

"It is my fate," said Mr. Micawber, unfeignedly sobbing, but doing even that, with a shadow of the old expression of doing something genteel; "it is my fate, gentlemen, that the finer feelings of our nature have become reproaches to me. My homage to Miss Wickfield, is a flight of arrows in my bosom. You had better leave me, if you please, to walk the earth as a vagabond. The worm will settle *my* business in double-quick time."

Without attending to this invocation, we stood by, until he put up his pocket-handkerchief, pulled up his shirt-collar, and, to delude any person in the neighbourhood who might have been observing him, hummed a tune with his hat very much on one side. I then mentioned—not knowing what might be lost, if we lost sight of him yet—that it would give me great pleasure to introduce him to my aunt, if he would ride out to Highgate, where a bed was at his service.

"You shall make us a glass of your own punch, Mr. Micawber," said I, "and forget whatever you have on your mind, in pleasanter reminiscences."

"Or, if confiding anything to friends will be more likely to relieve you, you shall impart it to us, Mr. Micawber," said Traddles, prudently.

"Gentlemen," returned Mr. Micawber, "do with me as you will! I am a straw upon the surface of the deep, and am tossed in all directions by the elephants—I beg your pardon; I should have said the elements."

We walked on, arm-in-arm, again; found the coach in the act of starting; and arrived at Highgate without encountering any difficulties by the way. I was very uneasy and very uncertain in my mind what to say or do for the best—so was Traddles, evidently. Mr. Micawber was for the most part plunged into deep gloom. He occasionally made an attempt to smarten himself, and hum the fag-end of a tune; but his relapses into profound melancholy were only made the more impressive by the mockery of a hat exceedingly on one side, and a shirt-collar pulled up to his eyes.

We went to my aunt's house rather than to mine, because of Dora's not being well. My aunt presented herself on being sent for, and welcomed Mr. Micawber with gracious cordiality. Mr. Micawber kissed her hand, retired to the

window, and pulling out his pocket-handkerchief, had a mental wrestle with himself.

Mr. Dick was at home. He was by nature so exceedingly compassionate of anyone who seemed to be ill at ease, and was so quick to find any such person out, that he shook hands with Mr. Micawber, at least half-a-dozen times in five minutes. To Mr. Micawber, in his trouble, this warmth, on the part of a stranger, was so extremely touching, that he could only say, on the occasion of each successive shake, "My dear sir, you overpower me!" Which gratified Mr. Dick so much, that he went at it again with greater vigour than before.

"The friendliness of this gentleman," said Mr. Micawber to my aunt, "if you will allow me, ma'am, to cull a figure of speech from the vocabulary of our coarser national sports —floors me. To a man who is struggling with a complicated burden of perplexity and disquiet, such a reception is trying, I assure you."

"My friend Mr. Dick," replied my aunt, proudly, "is not a common man."

"That I am convinced of," said Mr. Micawber. "My dear Sir!" for Mr. Dick was shaking hands with him again; "I am deeply sensible of your cordiality!"

"How do you find yourself?" said Mr. Dick, with an anxious look.

"Indifferent, my dear Sir," returned Mr. Micawber, sighing.

"You must keep up your spirits," said Mr. Dick, "and make yourself as comfortable as possible."

Mr. Micawber was quite overcome by these friendly words, and by finding Mr. Dick's hand again within his own. "It has been my lot," he observed, "to meet, in the diversified panorama of human existence, with an occasional oasis, but never with one so green, so gushing, as the present!"

At another time I should have been amused by this; but I felt that we were all constrained and uneasy, and I watched Mr. Micawber so anxiously, in his vacillations between an evident disposition to reveal something, and a counter-disposition to reveal nothing, that I was in a perfect fever. Traddles, sitting on the edge of his chair, with his eyes wide open, and his hair more emphatically erect than ever, stared by turns at the ground and at Mr. Micaw-

ber, without so much as attempting to put in a word. My aunt, though I saw that her shrewdest observation was concentrated on her new guest, had more useful possession of her wits than either of us; for she held him in conversation, and made it necessary for him to talk, whether he liked it or not.

"You are a very old friend of my nephew's, Mr. Micawber," said my aunt. "I wish I had had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"Madam," returned Mr. Micawber, "I wish I had had the honour of knowing you at an earlier period. I was not always the wreck you at present behold."

"I hope Mrs. Micawber and your family are well, Sir," said my aunt.

Mr. Micawber inclined his head. "They are as well, ma'am," he desperately observed, after a pause, "as Aliens and Outcasts can ever hope to be."

"Lord bless you, Sir!" exclaimed my aunt in her abrupt way. "What are you talking about?"

"The subsistence of my family, ma'am," returned Mr. Micawber, "trembles in the balance. My employer——"

Here Mr. Micawber provokingly left off; and began to peel the lemons that had been under my directions set before him, together with all the other appliances he used in making punch.

"Your employer, you know," said Mr. Dick, jogging his arm as a gentle reminder.

"My good Sir," returned Mr. Micawber, "you recall me. I am obliged to you." They shook hands again. "My employer, ma'am—Mr. Heep—once did me the favour to observe to me, that if I were not in the receipt of the stipendiary emoluments appertaining to my engagement with him, I should probably be a mountebank about the country, swallowing a sword-blade, and eating the devouring element. For anything that I can perceive to the contrary, it is still probable that my children may be reduced to seek a livelihood by personal contortion, while Mrs. Micawber abets their unnatural feats, by playing the barrel-organ."

Mr. Micawber, with a random but expressive flourish of his knife, signified that these performances might be expected to take place after he was no more; then resumed his peeling with a desperate air.

My aunt leaned her elbow on the little round table that

she usually kept beside her, and eyed him attentively. Notwithstanding the aversion with which I regarded the idea of entrapping him into any disclosure he was not prepared to make voluntarily, I should have taken him up at this point, but for the strange proceedings in which I saw him engaged; whereof his putting the lemon-peel into the kettle, the sugar into the snuffer-tray, the spirit into the empty jug, and confidently attempting to pour boiling water out of a candlestick, were among the most remarkable. I saw that a crisis was at hand, and it came. He clattered all his means and implements together, rose from his chair, pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, and burst into tears.

"My dear Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, behind his handkerchief, "this is an occupation, of all others, requiring an untroubled mind, and self-respect. I cannot perform it. It is out of the question."

"Mr. Micawber," said I, "what is the matter? Pray speak out. You are among friends."

"Among friends, Sir?" repeated Mr. Micawber; and all he had reserved came breaking out of him. "Good Heavens, it is principally because I *am* among friends that my state of mind is what it is. What is the matter, gentlemen? What is *not* the matter? Villainy is the matter; baseness is the matter; deception, fraud, conspiracy, are the matter; and the name of the whole atrocious mass is—HEEP!"

My aunt clapped her hands, and we all started up as if we were possessed.

"The struggle is over!" said Mr. Micawber, violently gesticulating with his pocket-handkerchief, and fairly striking out from time to time with both arms, as if he were swimming under superhuman difficulties. "I will lead this life no longer. I am a wretched being, cut off from everything that makes life tolerable. I have been under a Taboo in that infernal scoundrel's service. Give me back my wife, give me back my family, substitute Micawber for the petty wretch who walks about in the boots at present on my feet, and call upon me to swallow a sword to-morrow, and I'll do it. With an appetite!"

I never saw a man so hot in my life. I tried to calm him, that we might come to something rational; but he got hotter and hotter, and wouldn't hear a word.

"I'll put my hand in no man's hand," said Mr. Micawber, gasping, puffing, and sobbing, to that degree that he was like a man fighting with cold water, "until I have—blown to fragments—the—a—detestable—serpent—HEEP! I'll partake of no one's hospitality, until I have—a—moved Mount Vesuvius—to eruption—on—a—the abandoned rascal—HEEP! Refreshment—a—underneath this roof—particularly punch—would—a—choke me—unless—I had—previously—choked the eyes—out of the head—a—of—interminable cheat, and liar—HEEP! I—a—I'll know nobody—and—a—say nothing—and—a—live nowhere—until I have crushed—to—a—undiscoverable atoms—the—transcendent and immortal hypocrite and perjurer—HEEP!"

I really had some fear of Mr. Micawber's dying on the spot. The manner in which he struggled through these inarticulate sentences, and, whenever he found himself getting near the name of Heep, fought his way on to it, dashed at it in a fainting state, and brought it out with a vehemence little less than marvellous, was frightful; but now, when he sank into a chair, steaming, and looked at us, with every possible colour in his face that had no business there, and an endless procession of lumps following one another in hot haste up his throat, whence they seemed to shoot into his forehead, he had the appearance of being in the last extremity. I would have gone to his assistance, but he waved me off, and wouldn't hear a word.

"No, Copperfield!—No communication—a—until—Miss Wickfield—a—redress from wrongs inflicted by consummate scoundrel—HEEP!" (I am quite convinced he could not have uttered three words, but for the amazing energy with which this word inspired him when he felt it coming.) "Inviolable secret—a—from the whole world—a—no exceptions—this day week—a—at breakfast time—a—everybody present—including aunt—a—and extremely friendly gentleman—to be at the hotel at Canterbury—a—where—Mrs. Micawber and myself—Auld Lang Syne in chorus—and—a—will expose intolerable ruffian—HEEP! No more to say—a—or listen to persuasion—go immediately—not capable—a—bear society—upon the track of devoted and doomed traitor—HEEP!"

With this last repetition of the magic word that had kept him going at all, and in which he surpassed all his

previous efforts, Mr. Micawber rushed out of the house; leaving us in a state of excitement, hope, and wonder, that reduced us to a condition little better than his own. But even then his passion for writing letters was too strong to be resisted; for while we were yet in the height of our excitement, hope, and wonder, the following pastoral note was brought to me from a neighbouring tavern, at which he had called to write it:—

"Most secret and confidential.

"My dear Sir,

"I beg to be allowed to convey, through you, my apologies to your excellent aunt for my late excitement. An explosion of a smouldering volcano long suppressed, was the result of an internal contest more easily conceived than described.

"I trust I rendered tolerably intelligible my appointment for the morning of this day week, at the house of public entertainment at Canterbury, where Mrs. Micawber and myself had once the honour of uniting our voices to yours, in the well-known strain of the Immortal exciseman nurtured beyond the Tweed.

"The duty done, and act of reparation performed, which can alone enable me to contemplate my fellow-mortal, I shall be known no more. I shall simply require to be deposited in that place of universal resort, where

"'Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
"'The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,'

"—With the plain Inscription,

"Wilkins Micawber."

CHAPTER L.

MR. PEGGOTTY'S DREAM COMES TRUE.

By this time, some months had passed, since our interview on the bank of the river with Martha. I had never seen her since, but she had communicated with Mr. Peggotty on several occasions. Nothing had come of her zealous intervention; nor could I infer, from what he told me,

that any clue had ever been obtained, for a moment, to Emily's fate. I confess that I began to despair of her recovery, and gradually to sink deeper and deeper into the belief that she was dead.

His conviction remained unchanged. So far as I know —and I believe his honest heart was transparent to me—he never wavered again, in his solemn certainty of finding her. His patience never tired. And, although I trembled for the agony it might one day be to him to have his strong assurance shivered at a blow, there was something so religious in it, so affectingly expressive of its anchor being in the purest depths of his fine nature, that the respect and honour in which I held him were exalted every day.

His was not a lazy trustfulness that hoped, and did no more. He had been a man of sturdy action all his life, and he knew that in all things wherein he wanted help he must do his own part faithfully, and help himself. I have known him set out in the night, on a misgiving that the light might not be, by some accident, in the window of the old boat, and walk to Yarmouth. I have known him, on reading something in the newspaper that might apply to her, take up his stick, and go forth on a journey of three or four score miles. He made his way by sea to Naples, and back, after hearing the narrative to which Miss Dartle had assisted me. All his journeys were ruggedly performed; for he was always steadfast in a purpose of saving money for Emily's sake, when she should be found. In all this long pursuit, I never heard him repine; I never heard him say he was fatigued, or out of heart.

Dora had often seen him since our marriage, and was quite fond of him. I fancy his figure before me now, standing near her sofa, with his rough cap in his hand, and the blue eyes of my child-wife raised, with a timid wonder, to his face. Sometimes of an evening, about twilight, when he came to talk with me, I would induce him to smoke his pipe in the garden, as we slowly paced to and fro together; and then, the picture of his deserted home, and the comfortable air it used to have in my childish eyes of an evening when the fire was burning, and the wind moaning round it, came most vividly into my mind.

One evening, at this hour, he told me that he had found Martha waiting near his lodging on the preceding night when he came out, and that she had asked him not to leave

London on any account, until he should have seen her again.

"Did she tell you why?" I inquired.

"I asked her, Mas'r Davy," he replied, "but it is but few words as she ever says, and she on'y got my promise and so went away."

"Did she say when you might expect to see her again?" I demanded.

"No, Mas'r Davy," he returned, drawing his hand thoughtfully down his face. "I asked that too: but it was more (she said) than she could tell."

As I had long forborne to encourage him with hopes that hung on threads, I made no other comment on this information than that I supposed he would see her soon. Such speculations as it engendered within me I kept to myself, and those were faint enough.

I was walking alone in the garden, one evening, about a fortnight afterwards. I remember that evening well. It was the second in Mr. Micawber's week of suspense. There had been rain all day, and there was a damp feeling in the air. The leaves were thick upon the trees, and heavy with wet; but the rain had ceased, though the sky was still dark; and the hopeful birds were singing cheerfully. As I walked to and fro in the garden, and the twilight began to close around me, their little voices were hushed; and that peculiar silence which belongs to such an evening in the country when the lightest trees are quite still, save for the occasional droppings from their boughs, prevailed.

There was a little green perspective of trellis-work and ivy at the side of our cottage, through which I could see, from the garden where I was walking, into the road before the house. I happened to turn my eyes towards this place, as I was thinking of many things; and I saw a figure beyond, dressed in a plain cloak. It was bending eagerly towards me, and beckoning.

"Martha!" said I, going to it.

"Can you come with me?" she inquired, in an agitated whisper. "I have been to him, and he is not at home. I wrote down where he was to come, and left it on his table with my own hand. They said he would not be out long. I have tidings for him. Can you come directly?"

My answer was, to pass out at the gate immediately. She made a hasty gesture with her hand, as if to entreat

my patience and my silence, and turned towards London, whence, as her dress betokened, she had come expeditiously on foot.

I asked her if that were not our destination? On her motioning Yes, with the same hasty gesture as before, I stopped an empty coach that was coming by, and we got into it. When I asked her where the coachman was to drive, she answered "Anywhere near Golden Square! And quick!"—then shrank into a corner, with one trembling hand before her face, and the other making the former gesture, as if she could not bear a voice.

Now much disturbed, and dazzled with conflicting gleams of hope and dread, I looked at her for some explanation. But, seeing how strongly she desired to remain quiet, and feeling that it was my own natural inclination too, at such a time, I did not attempt to break the silence. We proceeded without a word being spoken. Sometimes she glanced out of the window, as though she thought we were going slowly, though indeed we were going fast; but otherwise remained exactly as at first.

We alighted at one of the entrances to the square she had mentioned, where I directed the coach to wait, not knowing but that we might have some occasion for it. She laid her hand on my arm, and hurried me on to one of the sombre streets, of which there are several in that part, where the houses were once fair dwellings in the occupation of single families, but have, and had, long degenerated into poor lodgings let off in rooms. Entering at the open door of one of these, and releasing my arm, she beckoned me to follow her up the common staircase, which was like a tributary channel to the street.

The house swarmed with inmates. As we went up, doors of rooms were opened and people's heads put out; and we passed other people on the stairs, who were coming down. In glancing up from the outside, before we entered, I had seen women and children lolling at the windows over flowerpots; and we seemed to have attracted their curiosity, for these were principally the observers who looked out of their doors. It was a broad panelled staircase, with massive balustrades of some dark wood; cornices above the doors, ornamented with carved fruit and flowers; and board seats in the windows. But all these tokens of past grandeur were miserably decayed and dirty; rot, damp, and age,

had weakened the flooring, which in many places was unsound and even unsafe. Some attempts had been made, I noticed, to infuse new blood into this dwindling frame, by repairing the costly old woodwork here and there with common deal; but it was like the marriage of a reduced old noble to a plebeian pauper, and each party to the ill-assorted union shrank away from the other. Several of the back windows on the staircase had been darkened or wholly blocked up. In those that remained, there was scarcely any glass; and, through the crumbling frames by which the bad air seemed always to come in, and never to go out, I saw, through other glassless windows, into other houses in a similar condition, and looked giddily down into a wretched yard which was the common dust-heap of the mansion.

We proceeded to the top-story of the house. Two or three times, by the way, I thought I observed in the indistinct light the skirts of a female figure going up before us. As we turned to ascend the last flight of stairs between us and the roof, we caught a full view of this figure pausing for a moment, at a door. Then it turned the handle, and went in.

"What's this!" said Martha, in a whisper. "She has gone into my room. I don't know her!"

I knew her. I had recognised her with amazement, for Miss Dartle.

I said something to the effect that it was a lady whom I had seen before, in a few words, to my conductress; and had scarcely done so when we heard her voice in the room, though not, from where we stood, what she was saying. Martha, with an astonished look, repeated her former action, and softly led me up the stairs; and then, by a little back door which seemed to have no lock, and which she pushed open with a touch, into a small empty garret with a low sloping roof: little better than a cupboard. Between this, and the room she had called hers, there was a small door of communication, standing partly open. Here we stopped, breathless with our ascent, and she placed her hand lightly on my lips. I could only see, of the room beyond, that it was pretty large; that there was a bed in it; and that there were some common pictures of ships upon the walls. I could not see Miss Dartle, or the person whom we had heard her address. Certainly, my companion could not, for my position was the best.

A dead silence prevailed for some moments. Martha kept one hand on my lips, and raised the other in a listening attitude.

"It matters little to me her not being at home," said Rosa Dartle, haughtily, "I know nothing of her. It is you I come to see."

"Me?" replied a soft voice.

At the sound of it, a thrill went through my frame. For it was Emily's!

"Yes," returned Miss Dartle, "I have come to look at you. What? You are not ashamed of the face that has done so much?"

The resolute and unrelenting hatred of her tone, its cold stern sharpness and its mastered rage, presented her before me, as if I had seen her standing in the light. I saw the flashing black eyes, and the passion-wasted figure; and I saw the scar, with its white track cutting through her lips quivering and throbbing as she spoke.

"I have come to see," she said, "James Steerforth's fancy; the girl who ran away with him, and is the town-talk of the commonest people of her native place; the bold, flaunting, practised companion of persons like James Steerforth. I want to know what such a thing is like."

There was a rustle, as if the unhappy girl, on whom she heaped these taunts, ran towards the door, and the speaker swiftly interposed herself before it. It was succeeded by a moment's pause.

When Miss Dartle spoke again, it was through her set teeth, and with a stamp upon the ground.

"Stay there!" she said, "or I'll proclaim you to the house, and the whole street! If you try to evade *me*, I'll stop you, if it's by the hair, and raise the very stones against you!"

A frightened murmur was the only reply that reached my ears. A silence succeeded. I did not know what to do. Much as I desired to put an end to the interview, I felt that I had no right to present myself; that it was for Mr. Peggotty alone to see her and recover her. Would he never come? I thought impatiently.

"So!" said Rosa Dartle, with a contemptuous laugh, "I see her at last! Why, he was a poor creature to be taken by that delicate mock-modesty, and that hanging head!"

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, spare me!" exclaimed Emily. "Whoever you are, you know my pitiable story, and for Heaven's sake spare me, if you would be spared yourself!"

"If *I* would be spared!" returned the other fiercely; "what is there in common between *us*, do you think?"

"Nothing but our sex," said Emily, with a burst of tears.

"And that," said Rosa Dartle, "is so strong a claim, preferred by one so infamous, that if I had any feeling in my breast but scorn and abhorrence of you, it would freeze it up. Our sex! You are an honour to our sex!"

"I have deserved this," cried Emily, "but it's dreadful! Dear, dear lady, think what I have suffered, and how I am fallen! Oh, Martha, come back! Oh, home, home!"

Miss Dartle placed herself in a chair, within view of the door, and looked downward, as if Emily were crouching on the floor before her. Being now between me and the light, I could see her curled lip, and her cruel eyes intently fixed on one place, with a greedy triumph.

"Listen to what I say!" she said; "and reserve your false arts for your dupes. Do you hope to move *me* by your tears? No more than you could charm me by your smiles, you purchased slave."

"Oh, have some mercy on me!" cried Emily. "Show me some compassion, or I shall die mad!"

"It would be no great penance," said Rosa Dartle, "for your crimes. Do you know what you have done? Do you ever think of the home you have laid waste?"

"Oh, is there ever night or day, when I don't think of it!" cried Emily; and now I could just see her, on her knees, with her head thrown back, her pale face looking upward, her hands wildly clasped and held out, and her hair streaming about her. "Has there ever been a single minute, waking or sleeping, when it hasn't been before me, just as it used to be in the lost days when I turned my back upon it for ever and for ever? Oh, home, home! Oh dear, dear uncle, if you ever could have known the agony your love would cause me when I fell away from good, you never would have shown it to me so constant, much as you felt it; but would have been angry to me, at least once in my life, that I might have had some comfort! I have none, none, no comfort upon earth, for all of them were always fond of me!" She dropped on her face, before the

imperious figure in the chair, with an imploring effort to clasp the skirt of her dress.

Rose Dartle sat looking down upon her, as inflexible as a figure of brass. Her lips were tightly compressed, as if she knew that she must keep a strong constraint upon herself—I write what I sincerely believe—or she would be tempted to strike the beautiful form with her foot. I saw her, distinctly, and the whole power of her face and character seemed forced into that expression.—Would he never come?

"The miserable vanity of these earthworms!" she said, when she had so far controlled the angry heavings of her breast, that she could trust herself to speak. "*Your* home! Do you imagine that I bestow a thought on it, or suppose you could do any harm to that low place, which money would not pay for, and handsomely? *Your* home! You were a part of the trade of your home, and were bought and sold like any other vendible thing your people dealt in."

"Oh not that!" cried Emily. "Say anything of me; but don't visit my disgrace and shame, more than I have done, on folks who are as honourable as you! Have some respect for them, as you are a lady, if you have no mercy for me."

"I speak," she said, not deigning to take any heed of this appeal, and drawing away her dress from the contamination of Emily's touch, "I speak of *his* home—where I live. Here," she said, stretching out her hand with her contemptuous laugh, and looking down upon the prostrate girl, "is a worthy cause of division between lady-mother and gentleman-son; of grief in a house where she wouldn't have been admitted as a kitchen-girl; of anger, and repining, and reproach. This piece of pollution, picked up from the water-side, to be made much of for an hour, and then tossed back to her original place!"

"No! no!" cried Emily, clasping her hands together. "When he first came into my way—that the day had never dawned upon me, and he had met me being carried to my grave!—I had been brought up as virtuous as you or any lady, and was going to be the wife of as good a man as you or any lady in the world can ever marry. If you live in his home and know him, you know, perhaps, what his power with a weak, vain girl might be. I don't defend

myself, but I know well, and he knows well, or he will know when he comes to die, and his mind is troubled with it, that he used all his power to deceive me, and that I believed him, trusted him, and loved him!"

Rosa Dartle sprang up from her seat; recoiled; and in recoiling struck at her, with a face of such malignity, so darkened and disfigured by passion, that I had almost thrown myself between them. The blow, which had no aim, fell upon the air. As she now stood panting, looking at her with the utmost detestation that she was capable of expressing, and trembling from head to foot with rage and scorn, I thought I had never seen such a sight, and never could see such another.

"*You* love him? *You?*" she cried, with her clenched hand, quivering as if it only wanted a weapon to stab the object of her wrath.

Emily had shrunk out of my view. There was no reply.

"And tell that to *me*," she added, "with your shameful lips? Why don't they whip these creatures? If I could order it to be done, I would have this girl whipped to death."

And so she would, I have no doubt. I would not have trusted her with the rack itself, while that furious look lasted.

She slowly, very slowly, broke into a laugh, and pointed at Emily with her hand, as if she were a sight of shame for gods and men.

"*She* love!" she said. "That carrion! And he ever cared for her, she'd tell me. Ha, ha! The liars that these traders are!"

Her mockery was worse than her undisguised rage. Of the two, I would have much preferred to be the object of the latter. But, when she suffered it to break loose, it was only for a moment. She had chained it up again, and however it might tear her within, she subdued it to herself.

"I came here, you pure fountain of love," she said, "to see—as I began by telling you—what such a thing as you was like. I was curious. I am satisfied. Also to tell you, that you had best seek that home of yours, with all speed, and hide your head among those excellent people who are expecting you, and whom your money will console. When it's all gone, you can believe, and trust, and love again, you know! I thought you a broken toy that had lasted its time; a worthless spangle that was tarnished,

and thrown away. But, finding you true gold, a very lady, and an ill-used innocent, with a fresh heart full of love and trustfulness—which you look like, and is quite consistent with your story! I have something more to say. Attend to it; for what I say I'll do. Do you hear me, you fairy spirit? What I say, I mean to do!"

Her rage got the better of her again, for a moment; but it passed over her face like a spasm, and left her smiling.

"Hide yourself," she pursued, "if not at home, somewhere. Let it be somewhere beyond reach; in some obscure life—or, better still, in some obscure death. I wonder, if your loving heart will not break, you have found no way of helping it to be still! I have heard of such means sometimes. I believe they may be easily found."

A low crying, on the part of Emily, interrupted her here. She stopped, and listened to it as if it were music.

"I am of a strange nature, perhaps," Rosa Dartle went on; "but I can't breathe freely in the air you breathe. I find it sickly. Therefore, I will have it cleared; I will have it purified of you. If you live here to-morrow, I'll have your story and your character proclaimed on the common stair. There are decent women in the house, I am told; and it is a pity such a light as you should be among them, and concealed. If, leaving here, you seek any refuge in this town in any character but your true one (which you are welcome to bear, without molestation from me), the same service shall be done you, if I hear of your retreat. Being assisted by a gentleman who not long ago aspired to the favour of your hand, I am sanguine as to that."

Would he never, never come? How long was I to bear this? How long could I bear it?

"Oh me, oh me!" exclaimed the wretched Emily, in a tone that might have touched the hardest heart, I should have thought; but there was no relenting in Rosa Dartle's smile. "What, what shall I do!"

"Do?" returned the other. "Live happy in your own reflections! Consecrate your existence to the recollection of James Steerforth's tenderness—he would have made you his serving-man's wife, would he not?—or to feeling grateful to the upright and deserving creature who would have taken you as his gift. Or, if those proud remembrances, and the consciousness of your own virtues, and the honourable position to which they have raised you in the eyes of

everything that wears the human shape, will not sustain you, marry that good man, and be happy in his condescension. If this will not do either, die! There are doorways and dust-heaps for such deaths, and such despair—find one, and take your flight to Heaven!"

I heard a distant foot upon the stairs. I knew it, I was certain. It was his, thank God!

She moved slowly from before the door when she said this, and passed out of my sight.

"But mark!" she added, slowly and sternly, opening the other door to go away, "I am resolved, for reasons that I have and hatreds that I entertain, to cast you out, unless you withdraw from my reach altogether, or drop your pretty mask. This is what I had to say; and what I say, I mean to do!"

The foot upon the stairs came nearer—nearer—passed her as she went down—rushed into the room!

"Uncle!"

A fearful cry followed the word. I paused a moment, and looking in, saw him supporting her insensible figure in his arms. He gazed for a few seconds in the face; then stooped to kiss it—oh, how tenderly! and drew a handkerchief before it.

"Mas'r Davy," he said, in a low tremulous voice, when it was covered, "I thank my Heav'nly Father, as my dream's come true! I thank Him hearty for having guided of me, in His own ways, to my darling!"

With those words he took her up in his arms; and, with the veiled face lying on his bosom, and addressed towards his own, carried her, motionless and unconscious, down the stairs.

CHAPTER LI.

THE BEGINNING OF A LONGER JOURNEY.

It was yet early in the morning of the following day, when, as I was walking in my garden with my aunt (who took little other exercise now, being so much in attendance on my dear Dora), I was told that Mr. Peggotty desired to speak with me. He came into the garden to meet me half-

way, on my going towards the gate; and bared his head, as it was always his custom to do when he saw my aunt, for whom he had a high respect. I had been telling her all that had happened overnight. Without saying a word, she walked up with a cordial face, shook hands with him, and patted him on the arm. It was so expressively done, that she had no need to say a word. Mr. Peggotty understood her quite as well as if she had said a thousand.

"I'll go in now, Trot," said my aunt, "and look after Little Blossom, who will be getting up presently."

"Not along of my being heer, ma'am, I hope?" said Mr. Peggotty. "Unless my wits is gone a bahd's neezing"—by which Mr. Peggotty meant to say, bird's-nesting—"this morning, 'tis along of me as you're a going to quit us?"

"You have something to say, my good friend," returned my aunt, "and will do better without me."

"By your leave, ma'am," returned Mr. Peggotty, "I should take it kind, pervising you doen't mind my clicketten, if you'd bide heer."

"Would you?" said my aunt, with short good-nature. "Then I am sure I will!"

So, she drew her arm through Mr. Peggotty's, and walked with him to a leafy little summer-house there was at the bottom of the garden, where she sat down on a bench, and I beside her. There was a seat for Mr. Peggotty too, but he preferred to stand, leaning his hand on the small rustic table. As he stood, looking at his cap for a little while before beginning to speak, I could not help observing what power and force of character his sinewy hand expressed, and what a good and trusty companion it was to his honest brow and iron-grey hair.

"I took my dear child away last night," Mr. Peggotty began, as he raised his eyes to ours, "to my lodging, wheer I have a long time been expecting of her and preparing fur her. It was hours afore she knowed me right; and when she did, she kneeled down at my feet, and kiender said to me, as if it was her prayers, how it all come to be. You may believe me, when I heerd her voice, as I had heerd at home so playful—and see her humbled, as it might be in the dust our Saviour wrote in with His blessed hand—I felt a wownd go to my 'art, in the midst of all its thankfulness."

He drew his sleeve across his face, without any pretence of concealing why; and then cleared his voice.

"It warn't for long as I felt that; for she was found. I had on'y to think as she was found, and it was gone. I doen't know why I do so much as mention it now, I'm sure. I didn't have it in my mind a minute ago, to say a word about myself; but it come up so nat'ral, that I yielded to it afore I was aweer."

"You are a self-denying soul," said my aunt, "and will have your reward."

Mr. Peggotty, with the shadows of the leaves playing athwart his face, made a surprised inclination of the head towards my aunt, as an acknowledgment of her good opinion; then, took up the thread he had relinquished.

"When my Em'ly took flight," he said, in stern wrath for the moment, "from the house wheer she was made a pris'ner by that theer spotted snake as Mas'r Davy see,—and his story's trew, and may GOD confound him!—she took flight in the night. It was a dark night, with a many stars a shining. She was wild. She ran along the sea beach, believing the old boat was theer; and calling out to us to turn away our faces, for she was a coming by. She heerd herself a crying out, like as if it was another person; and cut herself on them sharp-pinted stones and rocks, and felt it no more than if she had been rock herself. Ever so fur she run, and there was fire afore her eyes, and roarings in her ears. Of a sudden—or so she thowt, you unnerstand—the day broke, wet and windy, and she was lying b'low a heap of stone upon the shore, and a woman was a speaking to her, saying, in the language of that country, what was it as had gone so much amiss?"

He saw everything he related. It passed before him, as he spoke, so vividly, that, in the intensity of his earnestness, he presented what he described to me, with greater distinctness than I can express. I can hardly believe, writing now long afterwards, but that I was actually present in these scenes; they are impressed upon me with such an astonishing air of fidelity.

"As Em'ly's eyes—which was heavy—see this woman better," Mr. Peggotty went on, "she know'd as she was one of them as she had often talked to on the beach. Fur, though she had run (as I have said) ever so fur in the night, she had oftentimes wandered long ways, partly

afoot, partly in boats and carriages, and know'd all that country, 'long the coast, miles and miles. She hadn't no children of her own, this woman, being a young wife; but she was a looking to have one afore long. And may my prayers go up to Heaven that 'twill be a happ'ness to her, and a comfort, and a honour, all her life! May it love her and be dootiful to her, in her old age; helpful of her at the last; a Angel to her heer, and heerafter!"

"Amen!" said my aunt.

"She had been summat timorous and down," said Mr. Peggotty, "and had sat, at first, a little way off, at her spinning, or such work as it was, when Em'ly talked to the children. But Em'ly had took notice of her, and had gone and spoke to her; and as the young woman was partial to the children herself, they had soon made friends. Sermuchser, that when Em'ly went that way, she always giv Em'ly flowers. This was her as now asked what it was that had gone so much amiss. Em'ly told her, and she—took her home. She did indeed. She took her home," said Mr. Peggotty, covering his face.

He was more affected by this act of kindness, than I had ever seen him affected by anything since the night she went away. My aunt and I did not attempt to disturb him.

"It was a little cottage, you may suppose," he said, presently, "but she found space for Em'ly in it,—her husband was away at sea,—and she kep it secret, and prevailed upon such neighbours as she had (they was not many near) to keep it secret too. Em'ly was took bad with fever, and, what is very strange to me is,—maybe 'tis not so strange to scholars,—the language of that country went out of her head, and she could only speak her own, that no one unnerstood. She recollects, as if she had dreamed it, that she lay there, always a talking her own tongue, always believing as the old boat was round the next pint in the bay, and begging and imploring of 'em to send theer and tell how she was dying, and bring back a message of forgiveness, if it was on'y a wured. A'most the whole time, she thowt,—now, that him as I made mention on just now was lurking for her unnerneath the winder: now, that him as had brought her to this was in the room,—and cried to the good young woman not to give her up, and know'd, at the same time, that she couldn't unnerstand, and dreaded that she must be took away. Likewise the fire was afore

her eyes, and the roarings in her ears; and there was no to-day, nor yesterday, nor yet to-morrow; but everything in her life as ever had been, or as ever could be, and everything as never had been, and as never could be, was a crowding on her all at once, and nothing clear nor welcome, and yet she sang and laughed about it! How long this lasted, I doen't know; but then there come a sleep; and in that sleep, from being a many times stronger than her own self, she fell into the weakness of the littlest child."

Here he stopped, as if for relief from the terrors of his own description. After being silent for a few moments, he pursued his story.

"It was a pleasant arternoon when she awoke; and so quiet, that there warn't a sound but the rippling of that blue sea without a tide, upon the shore. It was her belief, at first, that she was at home upon a Sunday morning; but, the vine leaves as she see at the winder, and the hills beyond, warn't home, and contradicted of her. Then, come in her friend, to watch alongside of her bed; and then she know'd as the old boat warn't round that next pint in the bay no more, but was fur off; and know'd where she was, and why; and broke out a crying on that good young woman's bosom, wheer I hope her baby is a lying now, a cheering of her with its pretty eyes!"

He could not speak of this good friend of Emily's without a flow of tears. It was in vain to try. He broke down again, endeavouring to bless her!

"That done my Em'ly good," he resumed, after such emotion as I could not behold without sharing in; and as to my aunt, she wept with all her heart; "that done Em'ly good, and she begun to mend. But, the language of that country was quite gone from her, and she was forced to make signs. So she went on, getting better from day to day, slow, but sure, and trying to learn the names of common things—names as she seemed never to have heerd in all her life—till one evening come, when she was a setting at her window, looking at a little girl at play upon the beach. And of a sudden this child held out her hand, and said, what would be in English, 'Fisherman's daughter, here's a shell!'—for you are to unnerstand that they used at first to call her 'Pretty lady,' as the general way in that country is, and that she had taught 'em to call her 'Fisherman's daughter,' instead. The child says of

a sudden, 'Fisherman's daughter, here's a shell!' Then Em'ly unnerstands her; and she answers, bursting out a crying; and it all comes back!

"When Em'ly got strong again," said Mr. Peggotty, after another short interval of silence, "she cast about to leave that good young creetur, and get to her own country. The husband was come home, then; and the two together put her aboard a small trader bound to Leghorn, and from that to France. She had a little money, but it was less than little as they would take for all they done. I'm a'most glad on it, though they was so poor! What they done, is laid up wheer neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and wheer thieves do not break through nor steal. Mas'r Davy, it'll outlast all the treasure in the wureld.

"Em'ly got to France, and took service to wait on travelling ladies at a inn in the port. Theer, theer come, one day, that snake.—Let him never come nigh me. I doen't know what hurt I might do him!—Soon as she see him, without him seeing her, all her fear and wildness returned upon her, and she fled afore the very breath he draw'd. She come to England, and was set ashore at Dover.

"I doen't know," said Mr. Peggotty, "for sure, when her 'art begun to fail her; but all the way to England she had thowt to come to her dear home. Soon as she got to England she turned her face tow'rds it. But, fear of not being forgiv, fear of being pinted at, fear of some of us being dead along of her, fear of many things, turned her from it, kiender by force, upon the road: 'Uncle, uncle,' she says to me, 'the fear of not being worthy to do, what my torn and bleeding breast so longed to do, was the most fright'ning fear of all! I turned back, when my 'art was full of prayers that I might crawl to the old doorstep, in the night, kiss it, lay my wicked face upon it, and theer be found dead in the morning.'

"She come," said Mr. Peggotty, dropping his voice to an awe-stricken whisper, "to London. She—as had never seen it in her life—alone—without a penny—young—so pretty—come to London. A'most the moment as she lighted heer, all so desolate, she found (as she believed) a friend; a decent woman as spoke to her about the needlework as she had been brought up to do, about finding plenty of it fur her, about a lodging for the night, and making secret inquiration concerning of me and all at

home, to-morrow. When my child," he said aloud, and with an energy of gratitude that shook him from head to foot, "stood upon the brink of more than I can say or think on—Martha, trew to her promise, saved her!"

I could not repress a cry of joy.

"Mas'r Davy!" he said, gripping my hand in that strong hand of his, "it was you as first made mention of her to me. I thank'ee, Sir! She was arnest. She had know'd of her bitter knowledge wheer to watch and what to do. She had done it. And the Lord was above all! She come, white and hurried, upon Em'ly in her sleep. She says to her, 'Rise up from worse than death, and come with me!' Them belonging to the house would have stopped her, but they might as soon have stopped the sea. 'Stand away from me,' she says, 'I am a ghost that calls her from beside her open grave!' She told Em'ly she had seen me, and know'd I loved her, and forgiv her. She wrapped her, hasty, in her clothes. She took her, faint and trembling, on her arm. She heeded no more what they said, than if she had had no ears. She walked among 'em with my child, minding only her; and brought her safe out, in the dead of the night, from that black pit of ruin!

"She attended on Em'ly," said Mr. Peggotty, who had released my hand, and put his own hand on his heaving chest; "she attended to my Em'ly, lying wearied out, and wandering betwixt whiles, till late next day. Then she went in search of me; then in search of you, Mas'r Davy. She didn't tell Em'ly what she come out fur, lest her 'art should fail, and she should think of hiding of herself. How the cruel lady know'd of her being theer, I can't say. Whether him as I have spoke so much of, chanced to see 'em going theer, or whether (which is most like, to my thinking) he had heerd it from the woman, I doen't greatly ask myself. My niece is found.

"All night long," said Mr. Peggotty, "we have been together, Em'ly and me. 'Tis little (considering the time) as she has said, in wureds, through them broken-hearted tears; 'tis less as I have seen of her dear face, as grow'd into a woman's at my hearth. But, all night long, her arms has been about my neck; and her head has laid heer; and we knows full well, as we can put our trust in one another, ever more."

He ceased to speak, and his hand upon the table rested

there in perfect repose, with a resolution in it that might have conquered lions.

"It was a gleam of light upon me, Trot," said my aunt, drying her eyes, "when I formed the resolution of being godmother to your sister Betsey Trotwood, who disappointed me; but, next to that, hardly anything would have given me greater pleasure, than to be godmother to that good young creature's baby!"

Mr. Peggotty nodded his understanding of my aunt's feelings, but could not trust himself with any verbal reference to the subject of her commendation. We all remained silent, and occupied with our own reflections (my aunt drying her eyes, and now sobbing convulsively, and now laughing and calling herself a fool); until I spoke.

"You have quite made up your mind," said I to Mr. Peggotty, "as to the future, good friend? I need scarcely ask you."

"Quite, Mas'r Davy," he returned; "and told Em'ly. Theer's mighty countries, fur from heer. Our future life lays over the sea."

"They will emigrate together, aunt," said I.

"Yes!" said Mr. Peggotty, with a hopeful smile. "No one can't reproach my darling in Australia. We will begin a new life over theer!"

I asked him if he yet proposed to himself any time for going away.

"I was down at the Docks early this morning, Sir," he returned, "to get information concerning of them ships. In about six weeks or two months from now, there'll be one sailing—I see her this morning—went aboard—and we shall take our passage in her."

"Quite alone?" I asked.

"Ay, Mas'r Davy!" he returned. "My sister, you see, she's that fond of you and yourn, and that accustomed to think on'y of her own country, that it wouldn't be hardly fair to let her go. Besides which, theer's one she has in charge, Mas'r Davy, as doen't ought to be forgot."

"Poor Ham!" said I.

"My good sister takes care of his house, you see, ma'am, and he takes kindly to her," Mr. Peggotty explained for my aunt's better information. "He'll set and talk to her, with a calm spirit, wen it's like he couldn't bring himself

"And the name of the whole atrocious mass is—HEEP!"
—*David Copperfield*, ch. xlix., p. 713.

to open his lips to another. Poor fellow!" said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "theer's not so much left him, that he could spare the little as he has!"

"And Mrs. Gummidge?" said I.

"Well, I've had a mort of con-sideration, I do tell you," returned Mr. Peggotty, with a perplexed look which gradually cleared as he went on, "concerning of Missis Gummidge. You see, wen Missis Gummidge falls a thinking of the old 'un, she an't what you may call good company. Betwixt you and me, Mas'r Davy—and you, ma'am—wen Missis Gummidge takes to wimicking,"—our old county word for crying,—"she's liable to be considered to be, by them as didn't know the old 'un, peevish-like. Now I *did* know the old 'un," said Mr. Peggotty, "and I know'd his merits, so I unnerstan' her; but 'tan't entirely so, you see, with others—nat'rally can't be!"

My aunt and I both acquiesced.

"Wheerby," said Mr. Peggotty, "my sister might—I doen't say she would, but might—find Missis Gummidge give her a leetle trouble now-and-again. Theerfur 'tan't my intentions to moor Missis Gummidge 'long with them, but to find a Bein' fur her wheer she can fisherate for herself." (A Bein' signifies, in that dialect, a home, and to fisherate is to provide.) "Fur which purpose," said Mr. Peggotty, "I means to make her a 'lowance afore I go, as'll leave her pretty comfort'ble. She's the faithfullest of creeturs. 'Tan't to be expected, of course, at her time of life, and being lone and lorn, as the good old mawther is to be knocked about aboardship, and in the woods and wilds of a new and fur-away country. So that's what I'm a going to do with *her*."

He forgot nobody. He thought of everybody's claims and strivings, but his own.

"Em'ly," he continued, "will keep along with me—poor child, she's sore in need of peace and rest!—until such time as we goes upon our voyage. She'll work at them clothes, as must be made; and I hope her troubles will begin to seem longer ago than they was, wen she finds herself once more by her rough but loving uncle."

My aunt nodded confirmation of this hope, and imparted great satisfaction to Mr. Peggotty.

"Theer's one thing furder, Mas'r Davy," said he, putting his hand in his breast-pocket, and gravely taking out

the little paper bundle I had seen before, which he unrolled on the table. "Theer's these heer bank-notes—fifty pound, and ten. To them I wish to add the money as she come away with. I've asked her about that (but not saying why), and have added of it up; I an't a scholar. Would you be so kind as see how 'tis?"

He handed me, apologetically for his scholarship, a piece of paper, and observed me while I looked it over. It was quite right.

"Thank'ee, Sir," he said, taking it back. "This money, if you doen't see objections, Mas'r Davy, I shall put up jest afore I go, in a cover d'rected to him; and put that up in another, d'rected to his mother. I shall tell her, in no more wureds than I speak to you, what it's the price on; and that I'm gone, and past receiving of it back."

I told him that I thought it would be right to do so—that I was thoroughly convinced it would be, since he felt it to be right.

"I said that theer was on'y one thing furder," he proceeded with a grave smile, when he had made up his little bundle again, and put it in his pocket; "but theer was two. I warn't sure in my mind, wen I come out this morning, as I could go and break to Ham, of my own self, what had so thankfully happened. So I writ a letter while I was out, and put it in the post-office, telling of 'em how all was as 'tis, and that I should come down to-morrow to unload my mind of what little needs a doing of down theer, and, mostlike, take my farewell leave of Yarmouth."

"And do you wish me to go with you?" said I, seeing that he left something unsaid.

"If you could do me that kind favour, Mas'r Davy," he replied, "I know the sight on you would cheer 'em up a bit."

My little Dora being in good spirits, and very desirous that I should go—as I found on talking it over with her—I readily pledged myself to accompany him in accordance with his wish. Next morning, consequently, we were on the Yarmouth coach, and again travelling over the old ground.

As we passed along the familiar street at night—Mr. Peggotty, in despite of all my remonstrances, carrying my bag—I glanced into Omer and Joram's shop, and saw my old friend Mr. Omer there, smoking his pipe. I felt reluctant to be present, when Mr. Peggotty first met his sister

and Ham; and made Mr. Omer my excuse for lingering behind.

"How is Mr. Omer, after this long time?" said I, going in.

He fanned away the smoke of his pipe, that he might get a better view of me, and soon recognised me with great delight.

"I should get up, Sir, to acknowledge such an honour as this visit," said he, "only my limbs are rather out of sorts, and I am wheeled about. With the exception of my limbs and my breath, hows'ever, I am as hearty as a man can be, I'm thankful to say."

I congratulated him on his contented looks and his good spirits, and saw, now, that his easy-chair went on wheels.

"It's an ingenious thing, ain't it?" he inquired, following the direction of my glance, and polishing the elbow with his arm. "It runs as light as a feather, and tracks as true as a mail-coach. Bless you, my little Minnie—my grand-daughter you know, Minnie's child—puts her little strength against the back, gives it a shove, and away we go, as clever and merry as ever you see anything! And I tell you what—it's a most uncommon chair to smoke a pipe in."

I never saw such a good old fellow to make the best of a thing, and find out the enjoyment of it, as Mr. Omer. He was as radiant, as if his chair, his asthma, and the failure of his limbs, were the various branches of a great invention for enhancing the luxury of a pipe.

"I see more of the world, I can assure you," said Mr. Omer, "in this chair, than ever I see out of it. You'd be surprised at the number of people that looks in of a day to have a chat. You really would! There's twice as much in the newspaper, since I've taken to this chair, as there used to be. As to general reading, dear me, what a lot of it I do get through! That's what I feel so strong, you know! If it had been my eyes, what should I have done? If it had been my ears, what should I have done? Being my limbs, what does it signify? Why, my limbs only made my breath shorter when I used 'em. And now, if I want to go out into the street or down to the sands, I've only got to call Dick, Joram's youngest 'prentice, and away I go in my own carriage, like the Lord Mayor of London."

He half suffocated himself with laughing here.

"Lord bless you!" said Mr. Omer, resuming his pipe, "a man must take the fat with the lean; that's what he must make up his mind to, in this life. Joram does a fine business. Ex-cellent business!"

"I am very glad to hear it," said I.

"I knew you would be," said Mr. Omer. "And Joram and Minnie are like valentines. What more can a man expect? What's his limbs to *that?*"

His supreme contempt for his own limbs, as he sat smoking, was one of the pleasantest oddities I have ever encountered.

"And since I've took to general reading, you've took to general writing, eh, Sir?" said Mr. Omer, surveying me admiringly. "What a lovely work that was of yours! What expressions in it! I read it every word—every word. And as to feeling sleepy! Not at all!"

I laughingly expressed my satisfaction, but I must confess that I thought this association of ideas significant.

"I give you my word and honour, Sir," said Mr. Omer, "that when I lay that book upon the table, and look at it outside; compact in three separate and indiwidual wollumes—one, two, three; I am as proud as Punch to think that I once had the honour of being connected with your family. And dear me, it's a long time ago, now, ain't it? Over at Blunderstone. With a pretty little party laid along with the other party. And you quite a small party then, yourself. Dear, dear!"

I changed the subject by referring to Emily. After assuring him that I did not forget how interested he had always been in her, and how kindly he had always treated her, I gave him a general account of her restoration to her uncle by the aid of Martha; which I knew would please the old man. He listened with the utmost attention, and said, feelingly, when I had done:

"I am rejoiced at it, Sir! It's the best news I have heard for many a day. Dear, dear, dear! And what's going to be undertook for that unfortunate young woman, Martha, now?"

"You touch a point that my thoughts have been dwelling on since yesterday," said I, "but on which I can give you no information yet, Mr. Omer. Mr. Peggotty has not alluded to it, and I have a delicacy in doing so. I am sure

he has not forgotten it. He forgets nothing that is disinterested and good."

"Because you know," said Mr. Omer, taking himself up, where he had left off, "whatever *is* done, I should wish to be a member of. Put me down for anything you may consider right, and let me know. I never could think the girl all bad, and I am glad to find she's not. So will my daughter Minnie be. Young women are contradictory creatures in some things—her mother was just the same as her—but their hearts are soft and kind. It's all show with Minnie, about Martha. Why she should consider it necessary to make any show, I don't undertake to tell you. But it's all show, bless you. She'd do her any kindness in private. So, put me down for whatever you may consider right, will you be so good? and drop me a line where to forward it. Dear me!" said Mr. Omer, "when a man is drawing on to a time of life, where the two ends of life meet; when he finds himself, however hearty he is, being wheeled about for the second time, in a speeches of go-cart; he should be over-rejoiced to do a kindness if he can. He wants plenty. And I don't speak of myself, particular," said Mr. Omer, "because, Sir, the way I look at it is, that we are all drawing on to the bottom of the hill, whatever age we are, on account of time never standing still for a single moment. So let us always do a kindness, and be over-rejoiced. To be sure!"

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and put it on a ledge in the back of his chair, expressly made for its reception.

"There's Em'ly's cousin, him that she was to have been married to," said Mr. Omer, rubbing his hands feebly, "as fine a fellow as there is in Yarmouth! He'll come and talk or read to me, in the evening, for an hour together sometimes. That's a kindness, I should call it! All his life's a kindness."

"I am going to see him now," said I.

"Are you?" said Mr. Omer. "Tell him I was hearty, and sent my respects. Minnie and Joram's at a ball. They would be as proud to see you as I am, if they was at home. Minnie won't hardly go out at all, you see, 'on account of father,' as she says. So I swore to-night, that if she didn't go, I'd go to bed at six. In consequence of which," Mr. Omer shook himself and his chair, with laugh-

ter at the success of his device, "she and Joram's at a ball."

I shook hands with him, and wished him good night.

"Half a minute, Sir," said Mr. Omer. "If you was to go without seeing my little elephant, you'd lose the best of sights. You never see such a sight! Minnie!"

A musical little voice answered, from somewhere upstairs, "I am coming, grandfather!" and a pretty little girl with long, flaxen, curling hair, soon came running into the shop.

"This is my little elephant, Sir," said Mr. Omer, fondling the child. "Siamese breed, Sir. Now, little elephant!"

The little elephant set the door of the parlour open, enabling me to see that, in these latter days, it was converted into a bedroom for Mr. Omer, who could not be easily conveyed upstairs; and then hid her pretty forehead, and tumbled her long hair, against the back of Mr. Omer's chair.

"The elephant butts, you know, Sir," said Mr. Omer, winking, "when he goes at a object. Once, elephant. Twice. Three times!"

At this signal, the little elephant, with a dexterity that was next to marvellous in so small an animal, whisked the chair round with Mr. Omer in it, and rattled it off, pell-mell, into the parlour, without touching the doorpost: Mr. Omer indescribably enjoying the performance, and looking back at me on the road as if it were the triumphant issue of his life's exertions.

After a stroll about the town, I went to Ham's house. Peggotty had now removed here for good; and had let her own house to the successor of Mr. Barkis in the carrying business, who had paid her very well for the good-will, cart, and horse. I believe the very same slow horse that Mr. Barkis drove, was still at work.

I found them in the neat kitchen, accompanied by Mrs. Gummidge, who had been fetched from the old boat by Mr. Peggotty himself. I doubt if she could have been induced to desert her post, by anyone else. He had evidently told them all. Both Peggotty and Mrs. Gummidge had their aprons to their eyes, and Ham had just stepped out "to take a turn on the beach." He presently came home, very glad to see me; and I hope they were all the better for my being there. We spoke, with some approach

to cheerfulness, of Mr. Peggotty's growing rich in a new country, and of the wonders he would describe in his letters. We said nothing of Emily by name, but distantly referred to her more than once. Ham was the serenest of the party.

But, Peggotty told me, when she lighted me to a little chamber where the Crocodile Book was lying ready for me on the table, that he always was the same. She believed (she told me, crying) that he was broken-hearted; though he was as full of courage as of sweetness, and worked harder and better than any boat-builder in any yard in all that part. There were times, she said, of an evening, when he talked of their old life in the boat-house; and then he mentioned Emily as a child. But, he never mentioned her as a woman.

I thought I had read in his face that he would like to speak to me alone. I therefore resolved to put myself in his way next evening, as he came home from his work. Having settled this with myself, I fell asleep. That night, for the first time in all those many nights, the candle was taken out of the window, Mr. Peggotty swung in his old hammock in the old boat, and the wind murmured with the old sound round his head.

All next day, he was occupied in disposing of his fishing-boat and tackle; in packing up, and sending to London by waggon, such of his little domestic possessions as he thought would be useful to him; and in parting with the rest, or bestowing them on Mrs. Gummidge. She was with him all day. As I had a sorrowful wish to see the old place once more, before it was locked up, I engaged to meet them there in the evening. But I so arranged it, as that I should meet Ham first.

It was easy to come in his way, as I knew where he worked. I met him at a retired part of the sands, which I knew he would cross, and turned back with him, that he might have leisure to speak to me if he really wished. I had not mistaken the expression of his face. We had walked but a little way together, when he said, without looking at me:

"Mas'r Davy, have you seen her?"

"Only for a moment, when she was in a swoon," I softly answered.

We walked a little farther, and he said:

"Mas'r Davy, shall you see her, d'ye think?"

"It would be too painful to her, perhaps," said I.

"I have thowt of that," he replied. "So 'twould, Sir, so 'twould."

"But, Ham," said I, gently, "if there is anything that I could write to her, for you, in case I could not tell it; if there is anything you would wish to make known to her through me; I should consider it a sacred trust."

"I am sure on't. I thank'ee, Sir, most kind! I think theer is something I could wish said or wrote."

"What is it?"

We walked a little farther in silence, and then he spoke.

"'Tan't that I forgive her. 'Tan't that so much. 'Tis more as I beg of her to forgive me, for having pressed my affections upon her. Odd times, I think that if I hadn't had her promise fur to marry me, Sir, she was that trustful of me, in a friendly way, that she'd have told me what was struggling in her mind, and would have counselled with me, and I might have saved her."

I pressed his hand. "Is that all?"

"Theer's yet a something else," he returned, "if I can say it, Mas'r Davy."

We walked on, farther than we had walked yet, before he spoke again. He was not crying when he made the pauses I shall express by lines. He was merely collecting himself to speak very plainly.

"I loved her—and I love the mem'ry of her—too deep—to be able to lead her to believe of my own self as I'm a happy man. I could only be happy—by forgetting of her—and I'm afeerd I couldn't hardly bear as she should be told I done that. But if you, being so full of learning, Mas'r Davy, could think of anything to say as might bring her to believe I wasn't greatly hurt: still loving of her, and mourning for her: anything as might bring her to believe as I was not tired of my life, and yet was hoping fur to see her without blame, wheer the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest—anything as would ease her sorrowful mind, and yet not make her think as I could ever marry, or as 'twas possible that anyone could ever be to me what she was—I should ask of you to say that—with my prayers for her—that was so dear."

I pressed his manly hand again, and told him I would charge myself to do this as well as I could.

"I thank'ee, Sir," he answered. "'Twas kind of you to meet me. 'Twas kind of you to bear him company down. Mas'r Davy, I unnerstan' very well, though my aunt will come to Lon'on afore they sail, and they'll unite once more, that I am not like to see him agen. I fare to feel sure on't. We doen't say so, but so 'twill be, and better so. The last you see on him—the very last—will you give him the lovingest duty and thanks of the orphan, as he was ever more than a father to?"

This I also promised, faithfully.

"I thank'ee agen, Sir," he said, heartily shaking hands. "I know where you're a going. Good bye!"

With a slight wave of his hand, as though to explain to me that he could not enter the old place, he turned away. As I looked after his figure, crossing the waste in the moonlight, I saw him turn his face towards a strip of silvery light upon the sea, and pass on, looking at it, until he was a shadow in the distance.

The door of the boat-house stood open when I approached; and, on entering, I found it emptied of all its furniture, saving one of the old lockers, on which Mrs. Gummidge, with a basket on her knee, was seated, looking at Mr. Peggotty. He leaned his elbow on the rough chimney-piece, and gazed upon a few expiring embers in the grate; but he raised his head, hopefully, on my coming in, and spoke in a cheery manner.

"Come, according to promise, to bid farewell to't, eh, Mas'r Davy?" he said, taking up the candle. "Bare enough now, an't it?"

"Indeed you have made good use of the time," said I.

"Why, we have not been idle, Sir. Missis Gummidge has worked like a—I doen't know what Missis Gummidge ain't worked like," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at her, at a loss for a sufficiently-approving simile.

Mrs. Gummidge, leaning on her basket, made no observation.

"Theer's the very locker that you used to sit on, 'long with Em'ly!" said Mr. Peggotty, in a whisper. "I'm a going to carry it away with me, last of all. And heer's your old little bedroom, see, Mas'r Davy! A'most as bleak to-night, as 'art could wish!"

In truth, the wind, though it was low, had a solemn sound, and crept around the deserted house with a whispered

wailing that was very mournful. Everything was gone, down to the little mirror with the oyster-shell frame. I thought of myself, lying here, when that first great change was being wrought at home. I thought of the blue-eyed child who had enchanted me. I thought of Steerforth: and a foolish, fearful fancy came upon me of his being near at hand, and liable to be met at any turn.

"'Tis like to be long," said Mr. Peggotty, in a low voice, "afore the boat finds new tenants. They look upon't, down heer, as being unfort'nate now!"

"Does it belong to anybody in the neighbourhood?" I asked.

"To a mast-maker up town," said Mr. Peggotty. "I'm a going to give the key to him to-night."

We looked into the other little room, and came back to Mrs. Gummidge, sitting on the locker, whom Mr. Peggotty, putting the light on the chimney-piece, requested to rise, that he might carry it outside the door before extinguishing the candle.

"Dan'l," said Mrs. Gummidge, suddenly deserting her basket, and clinging to his arm, "my dear Dan'l, the parting words I speak in this house is, I mustn't be left behind. Doen't ye think of leaving me behind, Dan'l! Oh, doen't ye ever do it!"

Mr. Peggotty, taken aback, looked from Mrs. Gummidge to me, and from me to Mrs. Gummidge, as if he had been awakened from a sleep.

"Doen't ye, dearest Dan'l, doen't ye!" cried Mrs. Gummidge, fervently. "Take me 'long with you, Dan'l, take me 'long with you and Em'ly! I'll be your servant, constant and trew. If there's slaves in them parts where you're a going, I'll be bound to you for one, and happy, but doen't ye leave me behind, Dan'l, that's a deary dear!"

"My good soul," said Mr. Peggotty, shaking his head, "you doen't know what a long voyage, and what a hard life 'tis."

"Yes I do, Dan'l! I can guess!" cried Mrs. Gummidge. "But my parting words under this roof is, I shall go into the house and die, if I am not took. I can dig, Dan'l. I can work. I can live hard. I can be loving and patient now—more than you think, Dan'l, if you'll on'y try me. I wouldn't touch the 'lowance, not if I was dying of want, Dan'l Peggotty; but I'll go with you and Em'ly, if you'll

on'y let me, to the world's end! I know how 'tis; I know you think that I am lone and lorn; but, deary love, t'an't so no more! I ain't sat here, so long, a watching, and a thinking of your trials, without some good being done me. Mas'r Davy, speak to him for me! I knows his ways, and Em'ly's, and I knows their sorrows, and can be a comfort to 'em, some odd times, and labour for 'em allus! Dan'l, deary Dan'l, let me go 'long with you!"

And Mrs. Gummidge took his hand, and kissed it with a homely pathos and affection, in a homely rapture of devotion and gratitude, that he well deserved.

We brought the locker out, extinguished the candle, fastened the door on the outside, and left the old boat close shut up, a dark speck in the cloudy night. Next day, when we were returning to London outside the coach, Mrs. Gummidge and her basket were on the seat behind, and Mrs. Gummidge was happy.

CHAPTER LII.

I ASSIST AT AN EXPLOSION.

When the time Mr. Micawber had appointed so mysteriously, was within four-and-twenty hours of being come, my aunt and I consulted how we should proceed; for my aunt was very unwilling to leave Dora. Ah! how easily I carried Dora up and down stairs, now!

We were disposed, notwithstanding Mr. Micawber's stipulation for my aunt's attendance, to arrange that she should stay at home, and be represented by Mr. Dick and me. In short, we had resolved to take this course, when Dora again unsettled us by declaring that she never would forgive herself, and never would forgive her bad boy, if my aunt remained behind, on any pretence.

"I won't speak to you," said Dora, shaking her curls at my aunt. "I'll be disagreeable! I'll make Jip bark at you all day. I shall be sure that you really are a cross old thing, if you don't go!"

"Tut, Blossom!" laughed my aunt. "You know you can't do without me!"

"Yes, I can," said Dora. "You are no use to me at all. You never run up and down stairs for me, all day long. You never sit and tell me stories about Doady, when his shoes were worn out, and he was covered with dust—oh, what a poor little mite of a fellow! You never do anything at all to please me, do you, dear?" Dora made haste to kiss my aunt, and say, "Yes, you do! I'm only joking!" —lest my aunt should think she really meant it.

"But, aunt," said Dora, coaxingly, "now listen. You must go. I shall tease you, till you let me have my own way about it. I shall lead my naughty boy *such* a life, if he don't make you go. I shall make myself *so* disagreeable —and so will Jip! You'll wish you had gone, like a good thing, for ever and ever so long, if you don't go. Besides," said Dora, putting back her hair, and looking wonderingly at my aunt and me, "why shouldn't you both go? I am not very ill indeed. Am I?"

"Why, what a question!" cried my aunt.

"What a fancy!" said I.

"Yes! I know I am a silly little thing!" said Dora, slowly looking from one of us to the other, and then putting up her pretty lips to kiss us as she lay upon her couch. "Well, then, you must both go, or I shall not believe you; and then I shall cry!"

I saw, in my aunt's face, that she began to give way now, and Dora brightened again, as she saw it too.

"You'll come back with so much to tell me, that it'll take at least a week to make me understand!" said Dora. "Because I *know* I shan't understand, for a length of time, if there's any business in it. And there's sure to be some business in it! If there's anything to add up, besides, I don't know when I shall make it out; and my bad boy will look *so* miserable all the time. There! Now you'll go, won't you? You'll only be gone one night, and Jip will take care of me while you are gone. Doady will carry me up stairs before you go, and I won't come down again till you come back; and you shall take Agnes a dreadfully scolding letter from me, because she has never been to see us!"

We agreed, without any more consultation, that we would both go, and that Dora was a little Impostor, who feigned to be rather unwell, because she liked to be petted. She was greatly pleased, and very merry; and we four, that is

to say, my aunt, Mr. Dick, Traddles, and I, went down to Canterbury by the Dover mail that night.

At the hotel where Mr. Micawber had requested us to await him, which we got into, with some trouble, in the middle of the night, I found a letter, importing that he would appear in the morning punctually at half-past nine. After which, we went shivering, at that uncomfortable hour, to our respective beds, through various close passages; which smelt as if they had been steeped, for ages, in a solution of soup and stables.

Early in the morning, I sauntered through the dear old tranquil streets, and again mingled with the shadows of the venerable gateways and churches. The rooks were sailing about the Cathedral towers; and the towers themselves, overlooking many a long unaltered mile of the rich country and its pleasant streams, were cutting the bright morning air, as if there were no such thing as change on earth. Yet the bells, when they sounded, told me sorrowfully of change in everything; told me of their own age, and my pretty Dora's youth; and of the many, never old, who had lived and loved and died, while the reverberations of the bells had hummed through the rusty armour of the Black Prince hanging up within, and, motes upon the deep of Time, had lost themselves in air, as circles do in water.

I looked at the old house from the corner of the street, but did not go nearer to it, lest, being observed, I might unwittingly do any harm to the design I had come to aid. The early sun was striking edgewise on its gables and lattice-windows, touching them with gold; and some beams of its old peace seemed to touch my heart.

I strolled into the country for an hour or so, and then returned by the main street, which in the interval had shaken off its last night's sleep. Among those who were stirring in the shops, I saw my ancient enemy the butcher, now advanced to top-boots and a baby, and in business for himself. He was nursing the baby, and appeared to be a benignant member of society.

We all became very anxious and impatient, when we sat down to breakfast. As it approached nearer and nearer to half-past nine o'clock, our restless expectation of Mr. Micawber increased. At last we made no more pretence of attending to the meal, which, except with Mr. Dick, had been a mere form from the first; but my aunt walked up

and down the room, Traddles sat upon the sofa affecting to read the paper with his eyes on the ceiling; and I looked out of the window to give early notice of Mr. Micawber's coming. Nor had I long to watch, for, at the first chime of the half-hour, he appeared in the street.

"Here he is," said I, "and not in his legal attire!"

My aunt tied the strings of her bonnet (she had come down to breakfast in it), and put on her shawl, as if she were ready for anything that was resolute and uncompromising. Traddles buttoned his coat with a determined air. Mr. Dick, disturbed by these formidable appearances, but feeling it necessary to imitate them, pulled his hat, with both hands, as firmly over his ears as he possibly could; and instantly took it off again, to welcome Mr. Micawber.

"Gentlemen, and madam," said Mr. Micawber, "good morning! My dear Sir," to Mr. Dick, who shook hands with him violently, "you are extremely good."

"Have you breakfasted?" said Mr. Dick. "Have a chop!"

"Not for the world, my good Sir!" cried Mr. Micawber, stopping him on his way to the bell; "appetite and myself, Mr. Dixon, have long been strangers."

Mr. Dixon was so pleased with his new name, and appeared to think it so very obliging in Mr. Micawber to confer it upon him, that he shook hands with him again, and laughed rather childishly.

"Dick," said my aunt, "attention!"

Mr. Dick recovered himself, with a blush.

"Now, Sir," said my aunt to Mr. Micawber, as she put on her gloves, "we are ready for Mount Vesuvius, or anything else, as soon as *you* please."

"Madam," returned Mr. Micawber, "I trust you will shortly witness an eruption. Mr. Traddles, I have your permission, I believe, to mention here that we have been in communication together?"

"It is undoubtedly the fact, Copperfield," said Traddles, to whom I looked in surprise. "Mr. Micawber has consulted me, in reference to what he has in contemplation; and I have advised him to the best of my judgment."

"Unless I deceive myself, Mr. Traddles," pursued Mr. Micawber, "what I contemplate is a disclosure of an important nature."

"Highly so," said Traddles.

"Perhaps, under such circumstances, madam and gentlemen," said Mr. Micawber, "you will do me the favour to submit yourselves, for the moment, to the direction of one, who, however unworthy to be regarded in any other light but as a Waif and Stray upon the shore of human nature, is still your fellow-man, though crushed out of his original form by individual errors, and the accumulative force of a combination of circumstances?"

"We have perfect confidence in you, Mr. Micawber," said I, "and will do what you please."

"Mr. Copperfield," returned Mr. Micawber, "your confidence is not, at the existing juncture, ill-bestowed. I would beg to be allowed a start of five minutes by the clock; and then to receive the present company, inquiring for Miss Wickfield, at the office of Wickfield and Heep, whose Stipendiary I am."

My aunt and I looked at Traddles, who nodded his approval.

"I have no more," observed Mr. Micawber, "to say at present."

With which, to my infinite surprise, he included us all in a comprehensive bow, and disappeared; his manner being extremely distant, and his face extremely pale.

Traddles only smiled, and shook his head (with his hair standing upright on the top of it), when I looked to him for an explanation; so I took out my watch, and, as a last resource, counted off the five minutes. My aunt, with her own watch in her hand, did the like. When the time was expired, Traddles gave her his arm; and we all went out together to the old house, without saying one word on the way.

We found Mr. Micawber at his desk, in the turret office on the ground floor, either writing, or pretending to write, hard. The large office-ruler was stuck into his waistcoat, and was not so well concealed but that a foot or more of that instrument protruded from his bosom, like a new kind of shirt-frill.

As it appeared to me that I was expected to speak, I said aloud:

"How do you do, Mr. Micawber?"

"Mr. Copperfield," said Mr. Micawber, gravely, "I hope I see you well?"

"Is Miss Wickfield at home?" said I.

"Mr. Wickfield is unwell in bed, Sir, of a rheumatic fever," he returned; "but Miss Wickfield, I have no doubt, will be happy to see old friends. Will you walk in, Sir?"

He preceded us to the dining-room—the first room I had entered in that house—and flinging open the door of Mr. Wickfield's former office, said, in a sonorous voice:

"Miss Trotwood, Mr. David Copperfield, Mr. Thomas Traddles, and Mr. Dixon!"

I had not seen Uriah Heep since the time of the blow. Our visit astonished him, evidently; not the less, I dare say, because it astonished ourselves. He did not gather his eyebrows together, for he had none worth mentioning; but he frowned to that degree that he almost closed his small eyes, while the hurried raising of his grisly hand to his chin betrayed some trepidation or surprise. This was only when we were in the act of entering his room, and when I caught a glance at him over my aunt's shoulder. A moment afterwards, he was as fawning and as humble as ever.

"Well, I am sure," he said. "This is indeed an unexpected pleasure! To have, as I may say, all friends round Saint Paul's, at once, is a treat unlooked for! Mr. Copperfield, I hope I see you well, and—if I may umbly express self so—friendly towards them as is ever your friends, whether or not. Mrs. Copperfield, Sir, I hope she's getting on. We have been made quite uneasy by the poor accounts we have had of her state, lately, I do assure you."

I felt ashamed to let him take my hand, but I did not know yet what else to do.

"Things are changed in this office, Miss Trotwood, since I was a numble clerk, and held your pony; ain't they?" said Uriah, with his sickliest smile. "But *I* am not changed, Miss Trotwood."

"Well, Sir," returned my aunt, "to tell you the truth, I think you are pretty constant to the promise of your youth; if that's any satisfaction to you."

"Thank you, Miss Trotwood," said Uriah, writhing in his ungainly manner, 'for your good opinion! Micawber, tell 'em to let Miss Agnes know—and mother. Mother will be quite in a state, when she sees the present company!" said Uriah, setting chairs.

"You are not busy, Mr. Heep?" said Traddles, whose

eye the cunning red eye accidentally caught, as it at once scrutinised and evaded us.

"No, Mr. Traddles," replied Uriah, resuming his official seat, and squeezing his bony hands, laid palm to palm, between his bony knees. "Not so much so, as I could wish. But lawyers, sharks, and leeches, are not easily satisfied, you know! Not but what myself and Micawber have our hands pretty full, in general, on account of Mr. Wickfield's being hardly fit for any occupation, Sir. But it's a pleasure as well as a duty, I am sure, to work for *him*. You've not been intimate with Mr. Wickfield, I think, Mr. Traddles? I believe I've only had the honour of seeing you once myself?"

"No, I have not been intimate with Mr. Wickfield," returned Traddles; "or I might perhaps have waited on you long ago, Mr. Heep."

There was something in the tone of this reply, which made Uriah look at the speaker again, with a very sinister and suspicious expression. But, seeing only Traddles, with his good-natured face, simple manner, and hair on end, he dismissed it as he replied, with a jerk of his whole body, but especially his throat:

"I am sorry for that, Mr. Traddles. You would have admired him as much as we all do. His little failings would only have endeared him to you the more. But if you would like to hear my fellow-partner eloquently spoken of, I should refer you to Copperfield. The family is a subject he's very strong upon, if you never heard him."

I was prevented from disclaiming the compliment (if I should have done so, in any case), by the entrance of Agnes, now ushered in by Mr. Micawber. She was not quite so self-possessed as usual, I thought; and had evidently undergone anxiety and fatigue. But her earnest cordiality, and her quiet beauty, shone with the gentler lustre for it.

I saw Uriah watch her while she greeted us; and he reminded me of an ugly and rebellious genie watching a good spirit. In the meanwhile, some slight sign passed between Mr. Micawber and Traddles; and Traddles, unobserved except by me, went out.

"Don't wait, Micawber," said Uriah.

Mr. Micawber, with his hand upon the ruler in his breast, stood erect before the door, most unmistakably contemplating one of his fellow-men, and that man his employer.

"What are you waiting for?" said Uriah. "Micawber, did you hear me tell you not to wait?"

"Yes!" replied the immovable Mr. Micawber.

"Then why *do* you wait?" said Uriah.

"Because I—in short choose," replied Mr. Micawber, with a burst.

Uriah's cheeks lost colour, and an unwholesome paleness, still faintly tinged by his pervading red, overspread them. He looked at Mr. Micawber attentively, with his whole face breathing short and quick in every feature.

"You are a dissipated fellow, as all the world knows," he said, with an effort at a smile, "and I am afraid you'll oblige me to get rid of you. Go along! I'll talk to you presently."

"If there is a scoundrel on this earth," said Mr. Micawber, suddenly breaking out again with the utmost vehemence, "with whom I have already talked too much, that scoundrel's name is—HEEP!"

Uriah fell back, as if he had been struck or stung. Looking slowly round upon us with the darkest and wickedest expression that his face could wear, he said, in a lower voice:

"Oho! This is a conspiracy! You have met here, by appointment! You are playing Booty with my clerk, are you, Copperfield? Now, take care. You'll make nothing of this. We understand each other, you and me. There's no love between us. You were always a puppy with a proud stomach, from your first coming here; and you envy me my rise, do you? None of your plots against me; I'll counterplot you! Micawber, you be off. I'll talk to you presently."

"Mr. Micawber," said I, "there is a sudden change in this fellow, in more respects than the extraordinary one of his speaking the truth in one particular, which assures me that he is brought to bay. Deal with him as he deserves!"

"You are a precious set of people, ain't you?" said Uriah, in the same low voice, and breaking out into a clammy heat, which he wiped from his forehead, with his long lean hand, "to buy over my clerk, who is the very scum of society,—as you yourself were, Copperfield, you know it, before any one had charity on you,—to defame me with his lies? Miss Trotwood, you had better stop this; or I'll stop your husband shorter than will be pleasant to you. I won't know

your story professionally, for nothing, old lady! Miss Wickfield, if you have any love for your father, you had better not join that gang. I'll ruin him, if you do. Now, come! I have got some of you under the harrow. Think twice, before it goes over you. Think twice, you, Micawber, if you don't want to be crushed. I recommend you to take yourself off, and be talked to presently, you fool! while there's time to retreat. Where's mother?" he said, suddenly appearing to notice, with alarm, the absence of Traddles, and pulling down the bell-rope. "Fine doings in a person's own house!"

"Mrs. Heep is here, Sir," said Traddles, returning with that worthy mother of a worthy son. "I have taken the liberty of making myself known to her."

"Who are you to make yourself known?" retorted Uriah. "And what do you want here?"

"I am the agent and friend of Mr. Wickfield, Sir," said Traddles, in a composed business-like way. "And I have a power of attorney from him in my pocket, to act for him in all matters."

"The old ass has drunk himself into a state of dotage," said Uriah, turning uglier than before, "and it has been got from him by fraud!"

"Something has been got from him by fraud, I know," returned Traddles quietly; "and so do you, Mr. Heep. We will refer that question, if you please, to Mr. Micawber."

"Ury——!" Mrs. Heep began, with an anxious gesture.

"You hold your tongue, mother," he returned; "least said, soonest mended."

"But my Ury——"

"Will you hold your tongue, mother, and leave it to me?"

Though I had long known that his servility was false, and all his pretences knavish and hollow, I had had no adequate conception of the extent of his hypocrisy, until I now saw him with his mask off. The suddenness with which he dropped it, when he perceived that it was useless to him; the malice, insolence, and hatred, he revealed; the leer with which he exulted, even at this moment, in the evil he had done—all this time being desperate too, and at his wits' end for the means of getting the better of us—though perfectly consistent with the experience I had of him, at first took even me by surprise, who had known him so long, and disliked him so heartily.

I say nothing of the look he conferred on me, as he stood eyeing us, one after another; for I had always understood that he hated me, and I remembered the marks of my hand upon his cheek. But when his eyes passed on to Agnes, and I saw the rage with which he felt his power over her slipping away, and the exhibition, in their disappointment, of the odious passions that had led him to aspire to one whose virtues he could never appreciate or care for, I was shocked by the mere thought of her having lived, an hour, within sight of such a man.

After some rubbing of the lower part of his face, and some looking at us with those bad eyes, over his grisly fingers, he made one more address to me, half whining, and half abusive.

"You think it justifiable, do you, Copperfield, you who pride yourself so much on your honour and all the rest of it, to sneak about my place, eavesdropping with my clerk? If it had been *me*, I shouldn't have wondered; for I don't make myself out a gentleman (though I never was in the streets either, as you were, according to Micawber), but being *you!*—And you're not afraid of doing this, either? You don't think at all of what I shall do, in return; or of getting yourself into trouble for conspiracy and so forth? Very well. We shall see! Mr. What's-your-name, you were going to refer some question to Micawber. There's your referee. Why don't you make him speak? He has learned his lesson, I see."

Seeing that what he said had no effect on me or any of us, he sat on the edge of his table with his hands in his pockets, and one of his splay feet twisted round the other leg, waiting doggedly for what might follow.

Mr. Micawber, whose impetuosity I had restrained thus far with the greatest difficulty, and who had repeatedly interposed with the first syllable of Scoun-drel! without getting to the second, now burst forward, drew the ruler from his breast (apparently as a defensive weapon), and produced from his pocket a foolscap document, folded in the form of a large letter. Opening this packet, with his old flourish, and glancing at the contents, as if he cherished an artistic admiration of their style of composition, he began to read as follows:

"'Dear Miss Trotwood and gentlemen——'"

"Bless and save the man!" exclaimed my aunt in a low

voice. "He'd write letters by the ream, if it was a capital offence!"

Mr. Micawber, without hearing her, went on.

"'In appearing before you to denounce probably the most consummate Villain that has ever existed,'" Mr. Micawber, without looking off the letter, pointed the ruler, like a ghostly truncheon, at Uriah Heep, "'I ask no consideration for myself. The victim, from my cradle, of pecuniary liabilities to which I have been unable to respond, I have ever been the sport and toy of debasing circumstances. Ignominy, Want, Despair, and Madness, have, collectively or separately, been the attendants of my career.'"

The relish with which Mr. Micawber described himself, as a prey to these dismal calamities, was only to be equalled by the emphasis with which he read his letter; and the kind of homage he rendered to it with a roll of his head, when he thought he had hit a sentence very hard indeed.

"'In an accumulation of Ignominy, Want, Despair, and Madness, I entered the office—or, as our lively neighbour the Gaul would term it, the Bureau—of the Firm, nominally conducted under the appellation of Wickfield and—HEEP, but, in reality, wielded by—HEEP alone. HEEP, and only HEEP, is the mainspring of that machine. HEEP, and only HEEP, is the Forger and the Cheat.'"

Uriah, more blue than white at these words, made a dart at the letter, as if to tear it in pieces. Mr. Micawber, with a perfect miracle of dexterity or luck, caught his advancing knuckles with the ruler, and disabled his right hand. It dropped at the wrist, as if it were broken. The blow sounded as if it had fallen on wood.

"The Devil take you!" said Uriah, writhing in a new way with pain. "I'll be even with you."

"Approach me again, you—you—you HEEP of infamy," gasped Mr. Micawber, "and if your head is human, I'll break it. Come on, come on!"

I think I never saw anything more ridiculous—I was sensible of it, even at the time—than Mr. Micawber making broadsword guards with the ruler, and crying, "Come on!" while Traddles and I pushed him back into a corner, from which, as often as we got him into it, he persisted in emerging again.

His enemy, muttering to himself, after wringing his

wounded hand for some time, slowly drew off his neckkerchief and bound it up; then, held it in his other hand, and sat upon his table with his sullen face looking down.

Mr. Micawber, when he was sufficiently cool, proceeded with his letter.

"'The stipendiary emoluments in consideration of which I entered into the service of—HEEP,'" always pausing before that word and uttering it with astonishing vigour, "'were not defined, beyond the pittance, of twenty-two shillings and six per week. The rest was left contingent on the value of my professional exertions; in other and more expressive words, on the baseness of my nature, the cupidity of my motives, the poverty of my family, the general moral (or rather immoral) resemblance between myself and—HEEP. Need I say, that it soon became necessary for me to solicit from—HEEP—pecuniary advances towards the support of Mrs. Micawber, and our blighted but rising family? Need I say that this necessity had been foreseen by—HEEP? That those advances were secured by I O U's and other similar acknowledgments, known to the legal institutions of this country? And that I thus became immeshed in the web he had spun for my reception?'"

Mr. Micawber's enjoyment of his epistolary powers, in describing this unfortunate state of things, really seemed to outweigh any pain or anxiety that the reality could have caused him. He read on:

"'Then it was that—HEEP—began to favour me with just so much of his confidence, as was necessary to the discharge of his infernal business. Then it was that I began, if I may so Shakespearianly express myself, to dwindle, peak, and pine. I found that my services were constantly called into requisition for the falsification of business, and the mystification of an individual whom I will designate as Mr. W. That Mr. W. was imposed upon, kept in ignorance, and deluded, in every possible way; yet, that all this while, the ruffian—HEEP—was professing unbounded gratitude to, and unbounded friendship for, that much-abused gentleman. This was bad enough; but, as the philosophic Dane observes, with that universal applicability which distinguishes the illustrious ornament of the Elizabethan Era, worse remains behind!'"

Mr. Micawber was so very much struck by this happy rounding off with a quotation, that he indulged himself,

and us, with a second reading of the sentence, under pretence of having lost his place.

"'It is not my intention,'" he continued, reading on, "'to enter on a detailed list, within the compass of the present epistle (though it is ready elsewhere), of the various malpractices of a minor nature, affecting the individual whom I have denominated Mr. W., to which I have been a tacitly consenting party. My object, when the contest within myself between stipend and no stipend, baker and no baker, existence and non-existence, ceased, was to take advantage of my opportunities to discover and expose the major malpractices committed, to that gentleman's grievous wrong and injury, by—HEEP. Stimulated by the silent monitor within, and by a no less touching and appealing monitor without—to whom I will briefly refer as Miss W. —I entered on a not unlaborious task of clandestine investigation, protracted now, to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, over a period exceeding twelve calendar months.'"

He read this passage, as if it were from an Act of Parliament; and appeared majestically refreshed by the sound of the words.

"'My charges against—HEEP,'" he read on, glancing at him, and drawing the ruler into a convenient position under his left arm, in case of need, "'are as follows.'"

We all held our breath, I think. I am sure Uriah held his.

"'First,'" said Mr. Micawber. "'When Mr. W.'s faculties and memory for business became, through causes into which it is not necessary or expedient for me to enter, weakened and confused,—HEEP—designedly perplexed and complicated the whole of the official transactions. When Mr. W. was least fit to enter on business,—HEEP—was always at hand to force him to enter on it. He obtained Mr. W.'s signature under such circumstances to documents of importance, representing them to be other documents of no importance. He induced Mr. W. to empower him to draw out, thus, one particular sum of trust-money, amounting to twelve six fourteen, two and nine, and employed it to meet pretended business charges and deficiencies which were either already provided for, or had never really existed. He gave this proceeding, throughout, the appearance of having originated in Mr. W.'s own dishonest intention, and

of having been accomplished by Mr. W.'s own dishonest act; and has used it, ever since, to torture and constrain him.'"

"You shall prove this, you Copperfield!" said Uriah, with a threatening shake of the head. "All in good time!"

"Ask—HEEP—Mr. Traddles, who lived in his house after him," said Mr. Micawber, breaking off from the letter; "will you?"

"The fool himself—and lives there now," said Uriah, disdainfully.

"Ask—HEEP—if he ever kept a pocket-book in that house," said Mr. Micawber; "will you?"

I saw Uriah's lank hand stop, involuntarily, in the scraping of his chin.

"Or ask him," said Mr. Micawber, "if he ever burnt one there. If he says Yes, and asks you where the ashes are, refer him to Wilkins Micawber, and he will hear of something not at all to his advantage!"

The triumphant flourish with which Mr. Micawber delivered himself of these words, had a powerful effect in alarming the mother; who cried out in much agitation:

"Ury, Ury! Be umble, and make terms, my dear!"

"Mother!" he retorted, "will you keep quiet? You're in a fright, and don't know what you say or mean. Umble!" he repeated, looking at me, with a snarl; "I've umbled some of 'em for a pretty long time back, umble as I was!"

Mr. Micawber, genteelly adjusting his chin in his cravat, presently proceeded with his composition.

"'Second. HEEP has, on several occasions, to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief——'"

"But *that* won't do," muttered Uriah, relieved. "Mother, you keep quiet."

"We will endeavour to provide something that WILL do, and do for you finally, Sir, very shortly," replied Mr. Micawber.

"'Second. HEEP has, on several occasions, to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, systematically forged, to various entries, books, and documents, the signature of Mr. W.; and has distinctly done so in one instance, capable of proof by me. To wit, in manner following, that is to say:'"

Again, Mr. Micawber had a relish in this formal piling up of words, which, however ludicrously displayed in his

case, was, I must say, not at all peculiar to him. I have observed it, in the course of my life, in numbers of men. It seems to me to be a general rule. In the taking of legal oaths, for instance, deponents seem to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure, or so forth; and the old anathemas were made relishing on the same principle. We talk about the tyranny of words, but we like to tyrannise over them too; we are fond of having a large superfluous establishment of words to wait upon us on great occasions; we think it looks important, and sounds well. As we are not particular about the meaning of our liveries on state occasions, if they be but fine and numerous enough, so, the meaning or necessity of our words is a secondary consideration, if there be but a great parade of them. And as individuals get into trouble by making too great a show of liveries, or as slaves when they are too numerous rise against their masters, so I think I could mention a nation that has got into many great difficulties, and will get into many greater, from maintaining too large a retinue of words.

Mr. Micawber read on, almost smacking his lips:

"'To wit, in manner following, that is to say. Mr. W. being infirm, and it being within the bounds of probability that his decease might lead to some discoveries, and to the downfall of—HEEP'S—power over the W. family,—as I, Wilkins Micawber, the undersigned, assume—unless the filial affection of his daughter could be secretly influenced from allowing any investigation of the partnership affairs to be ever made, the said—HEEP—deemed it expedient to have a bond ready by him, as from Mr. W., for the beforementioned sum of twelve six fourteen, two and nine, with interest, stated therein to have been advanced by—HEEP—to Mr. W. to save Mr. W. from dishonour; though really the sum was never advanced by him, and has long been replaced. The signatures to this instrument, purporting to be executed by Mr. W. and attested by Wilkins Micawber, are forgeries by—HEEP. I have, in my possession, in his hand and pocket-book, several similar imitations of Mr. W.'s signature, here and there defaced by fire, but legible to any one. I never attested any such document. And I have the document itself, in my possession.'"

Uriah Heep, with a start, took out of his pocket a bunch

of keys, and opened a certain drawer; then, suddenly bethought himself of what he was about, and turned again towards us, without looking in it.

"'And I have the document,'" Mr. Micawber read again, looking about as if it were the text of a sermon, "'in my possession,'—that is to say, I had, early this morning, when this was written, but have since relinquished it to Mr. Traddles."

"It is quite true," assented Traddles.

"Ury, Ury!" cried the mother, "be umble and make terms. I know my son will be umble, gentlemen, if you'll give him time to think. Mr. Copperfield, I'm sure you know that he was always very umble, Sir!"

It was singular to see how the mother still held to the old trick, when the son had abandoned it as useless.

"Mother," he said, with an impatient bite at the handkerchief in which his hand was wrapped, "you had better take and fire a loaded gun at me."

"But I love you, Ury," cried Mrs. Heep. And I have no doubt she did; or that he loved her, however strange it may appear; though, to be sure, they were a congenial couple. "And I can't bear to hear you provoking the gentleman, and endangering of yourself more. I told the gentleman at first, when he told me up-stairs it was come to light, that I would answer for your being umble, and making amends. Oh, see how umble *I* am, gentlemen, and don't mind him!"

"Why, there's Copperfield, mother," he angrily retorted, pointing his lean finger at me, against whom all his animosity was levelled, as the prime mover in the discovery; and I did not undeceive him; "there's Copperfield, would have given you a hundred pound to say less than you've blurted out!"

"I can't help it, Ury," cried his mother. "I can't see you running into danger, through carrying your head so high. Better be umble, as you always was."

He remained for a little, biting the handkerchief, and then said to me with a scowl:

"What more have you got to bring forward? If anything, go on with it. What do you look at me for?"

Mr. Micawber promptly resumed his letter, only too glad to revert to a performance with which he was so highly satisfied.

"'Third. And last. I am now in a condition to show, by—HEEP's—false books, and—HEEP's—real memoranda, beginning with the partially destroyed pocket-book (which I was unable to comprehend, at the time of its accidental discovery by Mrs. Micawber, on our taking possession of our present abode, in the locker or bin devoted to the reception of the ashes calcined on our domestic hearth), that the weaknesses, the faults, the very virtues, the parental affections, and the sense of honour, of the unhappy Mr. W. have been for years acted on by, and warped to the base purposes of—HEEP. That Mr. W. has been for years deluded and plundered, in every conceivable manner, to the pecuniary aggrandisement of the avaricious, false, and grasping—HEEP. That the engrossing object of—HEEP—was, next to gain, to subdue Mr. and Miss W. (of his ulterior views in reference to the latter I say nothing) entirely to himself. That his last act, completed but a few months since, was to induce Mr. W. to execute a relinquishment of his share in the partnership, and even a bill of sale on the very furniture of his house, in consideration of a certain annuity, to be well and truly paid by—HEEP—on the four common quarter-days in each and every year. That these meshes; beginning with alarming and falsified accounts of the estate of which Mr. W. is the receiver, at a period when Mr. W. had launched into imprudent and ill-judged speculations, and may not have had the money, for which he was morally and legally responsible, in hand; going on with pretended borrowings of money at enormous interest, really coming from—HEEP—and by—HEEP—fraudulently obtained or withheld from Mr. W. himself, on pretence of such speculations or otherwise; perpetuated by a miscellaneous catalogue of unscrupulous chicaneries—gradually thickened, until the unhappy Mr. W. could see no world beyond. Bankrupt, as he believed, alike in circumstances, in all other hope, and in honour, his sole reliance was upon the monster in the garb of man,' "—Mr. Micawber made a good deal of this, as a new turn of expression,—"' who, by making himself necessary to him, had achieved his destruction. All this I undertake to show. Probably much more!' "

I whispered a few words to Agnes, who was weeping, half joyfully, half sorrowfully, at my side; and there was a movement among us, as if Mr. Micawber had finished.

He said, with exceeding gravity, "Pardon me," and proceeded, with a mixture of the lowest spirits and the most intense enjoyment, to the peroration of his letter.

"'I have now concluded. It merely remains for me to substantiate these accusations; and then, with my ill-starred family, to disappear from the landscape on which we appear to be an incumbrance. That is soon done. It may be reasonably inferred that our baby will first expire of inanition, as being the frailest member of our circle; and that our twins will follow next in order. So be it! For myself, my Canterbury Pilgrimage has done much; imprisonment on civil process, and want, will soon do more. I trust that the labour and hazard of an investigation—of which the smallest results have been slowly pieced together, in the pressure of arduous avocations, under grinding penurious apprehensions, at rise of morn, at dewy eve, in the shadows of night, under the watchful eye of one whom it were superfluous to call Demon—combined with the struggle of parental Poverty to turn it, when completed, to the right account, may be as the sprinkling of a few drops of sweet water on my funereal pyre. I ask no more. Let it be, in justice, merely said of me, as of a gallant and eminent naval Hero, with whom I have no pretensions to cope, that what I have done, I did, in despite of mercenary and selfish objects,

"For England, home, and beauty."

"'Remaining always, &c., &c., WILKINS MICAWBER.'"

Much affected, but still intensely enjoying himself, Mr. Micawber folded up his letter, and handed it with a bow to my aunt, as something she might like to keep.

There was, as I had noticed on my first visit long ago, an iron safe in the room. The key was in it. A hasty suspicion seemed to strike Uriah; and, with a glance at Mr. Micawber, he went to it, and threw the doors clanking open. It was empty.

"Where are the books?" he cried, with a frightful face. "Some thief has stolen the books!"

Mr. Micawber tapped himself with the ruler. "*I* did, when I got the key from you as usual—but a little earlier—and opened it this morning."

"Don't be uneasy," said Traddles. "They have come

into my possession. I will take care of them, under the authority I mentioned."

"You receive stolen goods, do you?" cried Uriah.

"Under such circumstances," answered Traddles, "yes."

What was my astonishment when I beheld my aunt, who had been profoundly quiet and attentive, make a dart at Uriah Heep, and seize him by the collar with both hands!

"You know what *I* want?" said my aunt.

"A strait-waistcoat," said he.

"No. My property!" returned my aunt. "Agnes, my dear, as long as I believed it had been really made away with by your father, I wouldn't—and, my dear, I didn't, even to Trot, as he knows—breathe a syllable of its having been placed here for investment. But, now I know this fellow's answerable for it, and I'll have it! Trot, come and take it away from him!"

Whether my aunt supposed, for the moment, that he kept her property in his neck-kerchief, I am sure I don't know; but she certainly pulled at it as if she thought so. I hastened to put myself between them, and to assure her that we would all take care that he should make the utmost restitution of everything he had wrongly got. This, and a few moments' reflection, pacified her; but she was not at all disconcerted by what she had done (though I cannot say as much for her bonnet), and resumed her seat composedly.

During the last few minutes, Mrs. Heep had been clamouring to her son to be "umble;" and had been going down on her knees to all of us in succession, and making the wildest promises. Her son sat her down in his chair; and, standing sulkily by her, holding her arm with his hand, but not rudely, said to me, with a ferocious look:

"What do you want done?"

"I will tell you what must be done," said Traddles.

"Has that Copperfield no tongue?" muttered Uriah. "I would do a good deal for you, if you could tell me, without lying, that somebody had cut it out."

"My Uriah means to be umble!" cried his mother. "Don't mind what he says, good gentlemen!"

"What must be done," said Traddles, "is this. First, the deed of relinquishment, that we have heard of, must be given over to me now—here."

"Suppose I haven't got it," he interrupted.

"But you have," said Traddles; "therefore, you know, we won't suppose so." And I cannot help avowing that this was the first occasion on which I really did justice to the clear head, and the plain, patient, practical good sense, of my old schoolfellow. "Then," said Traddles, "you must prepare to disgorge all that your rapacity has become possessed of, and to make restoration to the last farthing. All the partnership books and papers must remain in our possession; all your books and papers; all money accounts and securities, of both kinds. In short, everything here."

"Must it? I don't know that," said Uriah. "I must have time to think about that."

"Certainly," replied Traddles; "but, in the meanwhile, and until everything is done to our satisfaction, we shall maintain possession of these things; and beg you—in short, compel you—to keep your own room, and hold no communication with any one."

"I won't do it!" said Uriah, with an oath.

"Maidstone Jail is a safer place of detention," observed Traddles; "and though the law may be longer in righting us, and may not be able to right us so completely as you can, there is no doubt of its punishing *you*. Dear me, you know that quite as well as I! Copperfield, will you go round to the Guildhall, and bring a couple of officers?"

Here, Mrs. Heep broke out again, crying on her knees to Agnes to interfere in their behalf, exclaiming that he was very humble, and it was all true, and if he didn't do what we wanted, she would, and much more to the same purpose; being half frantic with fears for her darling. To inquire what he might have done, if he had had any boldness, would be like inquiring what a mongrel cur might do, if it had the spirit of a tiger. He was a coward, from head to foot; and showed his dastardly nature through his sullenness and mortification, as much as at any time of his mean life.

"Stop!" he growled to me; and wiped his hot face with his hand. "Mother, hold your noise. Well! Let 'em have that deed. Go and fetch it!"

"Do you help her, Mr. Dick," said Traddles, "if you please."

Proud of his commission, and understanding it, Mr. Dick accompanied her as a shepherd's dog might accompany a sheep. But, Mrs. Heep gave him little trouble; for she

not only returned with the deed, but with the box in which it was, where we found a banker's book and some other papers that were afterwards serviceable.

"Good!" said Traddles, when this was brought. "Now, Mr. Heep, you can retire to think: particularly observing, if you please, that I declare to you, on the part of all present, that there is only one thing to be done; that it is what I have explained; and that it must be done without delay."

Uriah, without lifting his eyes from the ground, shuffled across the room with his hand to his chin, and pausing at the door, said:

"Copperfield, I have always hated you. You've always been an upstart, and you've always been against me."

"As I think I told you once before," said I, "it is you who have been, in your greed and cunning, against all the world. It may be profitable to you to reflect, in future, that there never were greed and cunning in the world yet, that did not do too much, and overreach themselves. It is as certain as death."

"Or as certain as they used to teach at school (the same school where I picked up so much umbleness), from nine o'clock to eleven, that labour was a curse; and from eleven o'clock to one, that it was a blessing and a cheerfulness, and a dignity, and I don't know what all, eh?" said he with a sneer. "You preach, about as consistent as they did. Won't umbleness go down? I shouldn't have got round my gentleman fellow-partner without it, I think.—Micawber, you old bully, I'll pay *you!*"

Mr. Micawber, supremely defiant of him and his extended finger, and making a great deal of his chest until he had slunk out at the door, then addressed himself to me, and proffered me the satisfaction of "witnessing the re-establishment of mutual confidence between himself and Mrs. Micawber." After which, he invited the company generally to the contemplation of that affecting spectacle.

"The veil that has long been interposed between Mrs. Micawber and myself, is now withdrawn," said Mr. Micawber; "and my children and the Author of their Being can once more come in contact on equal terms."

As we were all very grateful to him, and all desirous to show that we were, as well as the hurry and disorder of our spirits would permit, I dare say we should all have

gone, but that it was necessary for Agnes to return to her father, as yet unable to bear more than the dawn of hope; and for some one else to hold Uriah in safe keeping. So, Traddles remained for the latter purpose, to be presently relieved by Mr. Dick; and Mr. Dick, my aunt, and I, went home with Mr. Micawber. As I parted hurriedly from the dear girl to whom I owed so much, and thought from what she had been saved, perhaps, that morning—her better resolution notwithstanding—I felt devoutly thankful for the miseries of my younger days which had brought me to the knowledge of Mr. Micawber.

His house was not far off; and as the street-door opened into the sitting-room, and he bolted in with a precipitation quite his own, we found ourselves at once in the bosom of the family. Mr. Micawber exclaiming, "Emma! my life!" rushed into Mrs. Micawber's arms. Mrs. Micawber shrieked, and folded Mr. Micawber in her embrace. Miss Micawber, nursing the unconscious stranger of Mrs. Micawber's last letter to me, was sensibly affected. The stranger leaped. The twins testified their joy by several inconvenient but innocent demonstrations. Master Micawber, whose disposition appeared to have been soured by early disappointment, and whose aspect had become morose, yielded to his better feelings, and blubbered.

"Emma!" said Mr. Micawber. "The cloud is past from my mind. Mutual confidence, so long preserved between us once, is restored, to know no farther interruption. Now, welcome poverty!" cried Mr. Micawber, shedding tears. "Welcome misery, welcome houselessness, welcome hunger, rags, tempest, and beggary! Mutual confidence will sustain us to the end!"

With these expressions, Mr. Micawber placed Mrs. Micawber in a chair, and embraced the family all round; welcoming a variety of bleak prospects, which appeared, to the best of my judgment, to be anything but welcome to them; and calling upon them to come out into Canterbury and sing a chorus, as nothing else was left for their support.

But Mrs. Micawber having, in the strength of her emotions, fainted away, the first thing to be done, even before the chorus could be considered complete, was to recover her. This, my aunt and Mr. Micawber did; and then my aunt was introduced, and Mrs. Micawber recognised me.

"Excuse me, dear Mr. Copperfield," said the poor lady,

giving me her hand, "but I am not strong; and the removal of the late misunderstanding between Mr. Micawber and myself was at first too much for me."

"Is this all your family, ma'am?" said my aunt.

"There are no more at present," returned Mrs. Micawber.

"Good gracious, I didn't mean that, ma'am," said my aunt. "I mean, are all these yours?"

"Madam," replied Mr. Micawber, "it is a true bill."

"And that eldest young gentleman, now," said my aunt, musing. "What has *he* been brought up to?"

"It was my hope when I came here," said Mr. Micawber, "to have got Wilkins into the Church: or perhaps I shall express my meaning more strictly, if I say the Choir. But there was no vacancy for a tenor in the venerable Pile for which this city is so justly eminent; and he has—in short, he has contracted a habit of singing in public-houses, rather than in sacred edifices."

"But he means well," said Mrs. Micawber, tenderly.

"I dare say, my love," rejoined Mr. Micawber, "that he means particularly well; but I have not yet found that he carries out his meaning, in any given direction whatsoever."

Master Micawber's moroseness of aspect returned upon him again, and he demanded, with some temper, what he was to do? Whether he had been born a carpenter, or a coach-painter, any more than he had been born a bird? Whether he could go into the next street, and open a chemist's shop? Whether he could rush to the next assizes, and proclaim himself a lawyer? Whether he could come out by force at the opera, and succeed by violence? Whether he could do anything, without being brought up to something?

My aunt mused a little while, and then said:

"Mr. Micawber, I wonder you have never turned your thoughts to emigration."

"Madam," returned Mr. Micawber, "it was the dream of my youth, and the fallacious aspiration of my riper years." I am thoroughly persuaded, by the bye, that he had never thought of it in his life.

"Ay?" said my aunt, with a glance at me. "Why, what a thing it would be for yourselves and your family, Mr. and Mrs. Micawber, if you were to emigrate now."

"Capital, madam, capital," urged Mr. Micawber, gloomily.

"That is the principal, I may say the only difficulty, my dear Mr. Copperfield," assented his wife.

"Capital?" cried my aunt. "But you are doing us a great service—have done us a great service, I may say, for surely much will come out of the fire—and what could we do for you, that would be half so good as to find the capital?"

"I could not receive it as a gift," said Mr. Micawber, full of fire and animation, "but if a sufficient sum could be advanced, say at five per cent. interest, per annum, upon my personal liability—say my notes of hand, at twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months, respectively, to allow time for something to turn up——"

"Could be? Can be, and shall be, on your own terms," returned my aunt, "if you say the word. Think of this now, both of you. Here are some people David knows, going out to Australia shortly. If you decide to go, why shouldn't you go in the same ship? You may help each other. Think of this now, Mr. and Mrs. Micawber. Take your time, and weigh it well."

"There is but one question, my dear ma'am, I could wish to ask," said Mrs. Micawber. "The climate, I believe, is healthy."

"Finest in the world!" said my aunt.

"Just so," returned Mrs. Micawber. "Then my question arises. Now, *are* the circumstances of the country such, that a man of Mr. Micawber's abilities would have a fair chance of rising in the social scale? I will not say, at present, might he aspire to be Governor, or anything of that sort; but would there be a reasonable opening for his talents to develop themselves—that would be amply sufficient—and find their own expansion?"

"No better opening anywhere," said my aunt, "for a man who conducts himself well, and is industrious."

"For a man who conducts himself well," repeated Mrs. Micawber, with her clearest business manner, "and is industrious. Precisely. It is evident to me that Australia is the legitimate sphere of action for Mr. Micawber!"

"I entertain the conviction, my dear madam," said Mr. Micawber, "that it is, under existing circumstances, the land, the only land, for myself and family; and that something of an extraordinary nature will turn up on that shore. It is no distance—comparatively speaking; and though

consideration is due to the kindness of your proposal, I assure you that is a mere matter of form."

Shall I ever forgot how, in a moment, he was the most sanguine of men, looking on to fortune; or how Mrs. Micawber presently discoursed about the habits of the kangaroo! Shall I ever recall that street of Canterbury on a market-day, without recalling him, as he walked back with us; expressing, in the hardy roving manner he assumed, the unsettled habits of a temporary sojourner in the land; and looking at the bullocks, as they came by, with the eye of an Australian farmer!

CHAPTER LIII.

ANOTHER RETROSPECT.

I MUST pause yet once again. Oh, my child-wife, there is a figure in the moving crowd before my memory, quiet and still, saying in its innocent love and childish beauty, Stop to think of me—turn to look upon the Little Blossom, as it flutters to the ground!

I do. All else grows dim, and fades away. I am again with Dora, in our cottage. I do not know how long she has been ill. I am so used to it in feeling, that I cannot count the time. It is not really long, in weeks or months; but, in my usage and experience, it is a weary, weary while.

They have left off telling me to "wait a few days more." I have begun to fear remotely, that the day may never shine, when I shall see my child-wife running in the sunlight with her old friend Jip.

He is, as it were suddenly, grown very old. It may be, that he misses in his mistress, something that enlivened him and made him younger; but he mopes, and his sight is weak, and his limbs are feeble, and my aunt is sorry that he objects to her no more, but creeps near her as he lies on Dora's bed—she sitting at the bedside—and mildly licks her hand.

Dora lies smiling on us, and is beautiful, and utters no hasty or complaining word. She says that we are very good to her; that her dear old careful boy is tiring himself out, she knows; that my aunt has no sleep, yet is always

wakeful, active, and kind. Sometimes, the little bird-like ladies come to see her; and then we talk about our wedding-day, and all that happy time.

What a strange rest and pause in my life there seems to be—and in all life, within doors and without—when I sit in the quiet, shaded, orderly room, with the blue eyes of my child-wife turned towards me, and her little fingers twining round my hand! Many and many an hour I sit thus; but, of all those times, three times come the freshest on my mind.

It is morning; and Dora, made so trim by my aunt's hands, shows me how her pretty hair *will* curl upon the pillow yet, and how long and bright it is, and how she likes to have it loosely gathered in that net she wears.

"Not that I am vain of it, now, you mocking boy," she says, when I smile; "but because you used to say you thought it so beautiful; and because, when I first began to think about you, I used to peep in the glass, and wonder whether you would like very much to have a lock of it. Oh what a foolish fellow you were, Doady, when I gave you one!"

"That was on the day when you were painting the flowers I had given you, Dora, and when I told you how much in love I was."

"Ah! but I didn't like to tell *you*," says Dora, "*then*, how I had cried over them, because I believed you really liked me! When I can run about again as I used to do, Doady, let us go and see those places where we were such a silly couple, shall we? And take some of the old walks? And not forget poor papa?"

"Yes, we will, and have some happy days. So you must make haste to get well, my dear."

"Oh, I shall soon do that! I am so much better, you don't know!"

It is evening; and I sit in the same chair, by the same bed, with the same face turned towards me. We have been silent, and there is a smile upon her face. I have ceased to carry my light burden up and down stairs now. She lies here all the day.

"Doady!"

"My dear Dora!"

"You won't think what I am going to say, unreasonable,

after what you told me, such a little while ago, of Mr. Wickfield's not being well? I want to see Agnes. Very much I want to see her."

"I will write to her, my dear."

"Will you?"

"Directly."

"What a good, kind boy! Doady, take me on your arm. Indeed, my dear, it's not a whim. It's not a foolish fancy. I want, very much indeed, to see her!"

"I am certain of it. I have only to tell her so, and she is sure to come."

"You are very lonely when you go down stairs, now?" Dora whispers, with her arm about my neck.

"How can I be otherwise, my own love, when I see your empty chair?"

"My empty chair!" She clings to me for a little while, in silence. "And you really miss me, Doady?" looking up, and brightly smiling. "Even poor, giddy, stupid me?"

"My heart, who is there upon earth that I could miss so much?"

"Oh, husband! I am so glad, yet so sorry!" creeping closer to me, and folding me in both her arms. She laughs and sobs, and then is quiet, and quite happy.

"Quite!" she says. "Only give Agnes my dear love, and tell her that I want very, very much to see her; and I have nothing left to wish for."

"Except to get well again, Dora."

"Ah, Doady! Sometimes I think—you know I always was a silly little thing!—that that will never be!"

"Don't say so, Dora! Dearest love, don't think so!"

"I won't, if I can help it, Doady. But I am very happy; though my dear boy is so lonely by himself, before his child-wife's empty chair!"

It is night; and I am with her still. Agnes has arrived; has been among us, for a whole day and an evening. She, my aunt, and I, have sat with Dora since the morning, all together. We have not talked much, but Dora has been perfectly contented and cheerful. We are now alone.

Do I know, now, that my child-wife will soon leave me? They have told me so; they have told me nothing new to my thoughts; but I am far from sure that I have taken that truth to heart. I cannot master it. I have withdrawn

by myself, many times to-day, to weep. I have remembered Who wept for a parting between the living and the dead. I have bethought me of all that gracious and compassionate history. I have tried to resign myself, and to console myself; and that, I hope, I may have done imperfectly; but what I cannot firmly settle in my mind is, that the end will absolutely come. I hold her hand in mine, I hold her heart in mine, I see her love for me, alive in all its strength. I cannot shut out a pale lingering shadow of belief that she will be spared.

"I am going to speak to you, Doady. I am going to say something I have often thought of saying, lately. You won't mind?" with a gentle look.

"Mind, my darling?"

"Because I don't know what you will think, or what you may have thought sometimes. Perhaps you have often thought the same. Doady, dear, I am afraid I was too young."

I lay my face upon the pillow by her, and she looks into my eyes, and speaks very softly. Gradually, as she goes on, I feel, with a stricken heart, that she is speaking of herself as past.

"I am afraid, dear, I was too young. I don't mean in years only, but in experience, and thoughts, and everything. I was such a silly little creature! I am afraid it would have been better, if we had only loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it. I have begun to think I was not fit to be a wife."

I try to stay my tears, and to reply, "Oh, Dora, love, as fit as I to be a husband!"

"I don't know," with the old shake of her curls. "Perhaps! But, if I had been more fit to be married, I might have made you more so, too. Besides, you are very clever, and I never was."

"We have been very happy, my sweet Dora."

"I was very happy, very. But, as years went on, my dear boy would have wearied of his child-wife. She would have been less and less a companion for him. He would have been more and more sensible of what was wanting in his home. She wouldn't have improved. It is better as it is."

"Oh, Dora, dearest, dearest, do not speak to me so. Every word seems a reproach!"

"No, not a syllable!" she answers, kissing me. "Oh, my dear, you never deserved it, and I loved you far too well, to say a reproachful word to you, in earnest—it was all the merit I had, except being pretty—or you thought me so. Is it lonely, down stairs, Doady?"

"Very! Very!"

"Don't cry! Is my chair there?"

"In its old place."

"Oh, how my poor boy cries! Hush, hush! Now, make me one promise. I want to speak to Agnes. When you go down stairs, tell Agnes so, and send her up to me; and while I speak to her, let no one come—not even aunt. I want to speak to Agnes by herself. I want to speak to Agnes, quite alone."

I promise that she shall, immediately; but I cannot leave her, for my grief.

"I said that it was better as it is!" she whispers, as she holds me in her arms. "Oh, Doady, after more years, you never could have loved your child-wife better than you do; and, after more years, she would so have tried and disappointed you, that you might not have been able to love her half so well! I know I was too young and foolish. It is much better as it is!"

Agnes is down stairs, when I go into the parlour; and I give her the message. She disappears, leaving me alone with Jip.

His Chinese house is by the fire; and he lies within it, on his bed of flannel, querulously trying to sleep. The bright moon is high and clear. As I look out on the night, my tears fall fast, and my undisciplined heart is chastened heavily—heavily.

I sit down by the fire thinking with a blind remorse of all those secret feelings I have nourished since my marriage. I think of every little trifle between me and Dora, and feel the truth, that trifles make the sum of life. Ever rising from the sea of my remembrance, is the image of the dear child as I knew her first, graced by my young love, and by her own, with every fascination wherein such love is rich. Would it, indeed, have been better if we had loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it? Undisciplined heart, reply!

How the time wears, I know not; until I am recalled by

my child-wife's old companion. More restless than he was, he crawls out of his house, and looks at me, and wanders to the door, and whines to go up-stairs.

"Not to-night, Jip! Not to-night!"

He comes very slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face.

"Oh, Jip! It may be, never again!"

He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and with a plaintive cry, is dead.

"Oh, Agnes! Look, look, here!"

—That face, so full of pity and of grief, that rain of tears, that awful mute appeal to me, that solemn hand upraised towards Heaven!

"Agnes?"

It is over. Darkness comes before my eyes; and, for a time, all things are blotted out of my remembrance.

CHAPTER LIV.

MR. MICAWBER'S TRANSACTIONS.

This is not the time at which I am to enter on the state of my mind beneath its load of sorrow. I came to think that the Future was walled up before me, that the energy and action of my life were at an end, that I never could find any refuge but in the grave. I came to think so, I say, but not in the first shock of my grief. It slowly grew to that. If the events I go on to relate, had not thickened around me, in the beginning to confuse, and in the end to augment, my affliction, it is possible (though I think not probable), that I might have fallen at once into this condition. As it was, an interval occurred before I fully knew my own distress; an interval, in which I even supposed that its sharpest pangs were past; and when my mind could soothe itself by resting on all that was most innocent and beautiful, in the tender story that was closed for ever.

When it was first proposed that I should go abroad, or how it came to be agreed among us that I was to seek the restoration of my peace in change and travel, I do not, even now, distinctly know. The spirit of Agnes so pervaded all we thought, and said, and did, in that time of sorrow,

that I assume I may refer the project to her influence. But her influence was so quiet that I know no more.

And now, indeed, I began to think that in my old association of her with the stained-glass window in the church, a prophetic foreshadowing of what she would be to me, in the calamity that was to happen in the fulness of time, had found a way into my mind. In all that sorrow, from the moment, never to be forgotten, when she stood before me with her upraised hand, she was like a sacred presence in my lonely house. When the Angel of Death alighted there, my child-wife fell asleep—they told me so when I could bear to hear it—on her bosom, with a smile. From my swoon, I first awoke to a consciousness of her compassionate tears, her words of hope and peace, her gentle face bending down as from a purer region nearer Heaven, over my undisciplined heart, and softening its pain.

Let me go on.

I was to go abroad. That seemed to have been determined among us from the first. The ground now covering all that could perish of my departed wife, I waited only for what Mr. Micawber called the "final pulverisation of Heep," and for the departure of the emigrants.

At the request of Traddles, most affectionate and devoted of friends in my trouble, we returned to Canterbury: I mean my aunt, Agnes, and I. We proceeded by appointment straight to Mr. Micawber's house; where, and at Mr. Wickfield's, my friend had been labouring ever since our explosive meeting. When poor Mrs. Micawber saw me come in, in my black clothes, she was sensibly affected. There was a great deal of good in Mrs. Micawber's heart, which had not been dunned out of it in all those many years.

"Well, Mr. and Mrs. Micawber," was my aunt's first salutation after we were seated. "Pray, have you thought about that emigration proposal of mine?"

"My dear madam," returned Mr. Micawber, "perhaps I cannot better express the conclusion at which Mrs. Micawber, your humble servant, and I may add our children, have jointly and severally arrived, than by borrowing the language of an illustrious poet, to reply that our Boat is on the shore, and our Bark is on the sea."

"That's right," said my aunt. "I augur all sorts of good from your sensible decision."

"Madam, you do us a great deal of honour," he rejoined.

He then referred to a memorandum. "With respect to the pecuniary assistance enabling us to launch our frail canoe on the ocean of enterprise, I have reconsidered that important business point; and would beg to propose my notes of hand—drawn, it is needless to stipulate, on stamps of the amounts respectively required by the various Acts of Parliament applying to such securities—at eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty months. The proposition I originally submitted, was twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four; but I am apprehensive that such an arrangement might not allow sufficient time for the requisite amount of—Something—to turn up. We might not," said Mr. Micawber, looking round the room as if it represented several hundred acres of highly-cultivated land, "on the first responsibility becoming due, have been successful in our harvest, or we might not have got our harvest in. Labour, I believe, is sometimes difficult to obtain in that portion of our colonial possessions where it will be our lot to combat with the teeming soil."

"Arrange it in any way you please, Sir," said my aunt.

"Madam," he replied, "Mrs. Micawber and myself are deeply sensible of the very considerate kindness of our friends and patrons. What I wish is, to be perfectly business-like, and perfectly punctual. Turning over, as we are about to turn over, an entirely new leaf; and falling back, as we are now in the act of falling back, for a Spring of no common magnitude; it is important to my sense of self-respect, besides being an example to my son, that these arrangements should be concluded as between man and man."

I don't know that Mr. Micawber attached any meaning to this last phrase; I don't know that anybody ever does, or did; but he appeared to relish it uncommonly, and repeated, with an impressive cough, "as between man and man."

"I propose," said Mr. Micawber, "Bills—a convenience to the mercantile world, for which, I believe, we are originally indebted to the Jews, who appear to me to have had a devilish deal too much to do with them ever since—because they are negotiable. But if a Bond, or any other description of security, would be preferred, I should be happy to execute any such instrument. As between man and man."

My aunt observed, that in a case where both parties were willing to agree to anything, she took it for granted there

would be no difficulty in settling this point. Mr. Micawber was of her opinion.

"In reference to our domestic preparations, madam," said Mr. Micawber, with some pride, "for meeting the destiny to which we are now understood to be self-devoted, I beg to report them. My eldest daughter attends at five every morning in a neighbouring establishment, to acquire the process—if process it may be called—of milking cows. My younger children are instructed to observe, as closely as circumstances will permit, the habits of the pigs and poultry maintained in the poorer parts of this city: a pursuit from which they have, on two occasions, been brought home, within an inch of being run over. I have myself directed some attention, during the past week, to the art of baking; and my son Wilkins has issued forth with a walking-stick and driven cattle, when permitted, by the rugged hirelings who had them in charge, to render any voluntary service in that direction—which I regret to say, for the credit of our nature, was not often; he being generally warned, with imprecations, to desist."

"All very right, indeed," said my aunt, encouragingly. "Mrs. Micawber has been busy, too, I have no doubt."

"My dear madam," returned Mrs. Micawber, with her business-like air, "I am free to confess, that I have not been actively engaged in pursuits immediately connected with cultivation or with stock, though well aware that both will claim my attention on a foreign shore. Such opportunities as I have been enabled to alienate from my domestic duties, I have devoted to corresponding at some length with my family. For I own it seems to me, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, who always fell back on me, I suppose from old habit, to whomsoever else she might address her discourse at starting, "that the time is come when the past should be buried in oblivion; when my family should take Mr. Micawber by the hand, and Mr. Micawber should take my family by the hand; when the lion should lie down with the lamb, and my family be on terms with Mr. Micawber."

I said I thought so too.

"This, at least, is the light, my dear Mr. Copperfield," pursued Mrs. Micawber, "in which *I* view the subject. When I lived at home with my papa and mama, my papa was accustomed to ask, when any point was under discus-

sion in our limited circle, 'In what light does my Emma view the subject?' That my papa was too partial, I know; still, on such a point as the frigid coldness which has ever subsisted between Mr. Micawber and my family, I necessarily have formed an opinion, delusive though it may be."

"No doubt. Of course you have, ma'am," said my aunt.

"Precisely so," assented Mrs. Micawber. "Now, I may be wrong in my conclusions; it is very likely that I am; but my individual impression is, that the gulf between my family and Mr. Micawber may be traced to an apprehension, on the part of my family, that Mr. Micawber would require pecuniary accommodation. I cannot help thinking," said Mrs. Micawber, with an air of deep sagacity, "that there are members of my family who have been apprehensive that Mr. Micawber would solicit them for their names.—I do not mean to be conferred in Baptism upon our children, but to be inscribed on Bills of Exchange, and negotiated in the Money Market."

The look of penetration with which Mrs. Micawber announced this discovery, as if no one had ever thought of it before, seemed rather to astonish my aunt; who abruptly replied, "Well, ma'am, upon the whole, I shouldn't wonder if you were right!"

"Mr. Micawber being now on the eve of casting off the pecuniary shackles that have so long enthralled him," said Mrs. Micawber, "and of commencing a new career in a country where there is sufficient range for his abilities,—which, in my opinion, is exceedingly important; Mr. Micawber's abilities peculiarly requiring space,—it seems to me that my family should signalise the occasion by coming forward. What I could wish to see, would be a meeting between Mr. Micawber and my family at a festive entertainment, to be given at my family's expense; where Mr. Micawber's health and prosperity being proposed, by some leading member of my family, Mr. Micawber might have an opportunity of developing his views."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, with some heat, "it may be better for me to state distinctly, at once, that if I were to develop my views to that assembled group, they would possibly be found of an offensive nature: my impression being that your family are, in the aggregate, impertinent Snobs; and, in detail, unmitigated Ruffians."

"Micawber," said Mrs. Micawber, shaking her head,

"no! You have never understood them, and they have never understood you."

Mr. Micawber coughed.

"They have never understood you, Micawber," said his wife. "They may be incapable of it. If so, that is their misfortune. I can pity their misfortune."

"I am extremely sorry, my dear Emma," said Mr. Micawber, relenting, "to have been betrayed into any expressions that might, even remotely, have the appearance of being strong expressions. All I would say, is, that I can go abroad without your family coming forward to favour me, —in short, with a parting Shove of their cold shoulders; and that, upon the whole, I would rather leave England with such impetus as I possess, than derive any acceleration of it from that quarter. At the same time, my dear, if they should condescend to reply to your communications— which our joint experience renders most improbable—far be it from me to be a barrier to your wishes."

The matter being thus amicably settled, Mr. Micawber gave Mrs. Micawber his arm, and glancing at the heap of books and papers lying before Traddles on the table, said they would leave us to ourselves; which they ceremoniously did.

"My dear Copperfield," said Traddles, leaning back in his chair when they were gone, and looking at me with an affection that made his eyes red, and his hair all kinds of shapes, "I don't make any excuse for troubling you with business, because I know you are deeply interested in it, and it may divert your thoughts. My dear boy, I hope you are not worn out?"

"I am quite myself," said I, after a pause. "We have more cause to think of my aunt than of anyone. You know how much she has done."

"Surely, surely," answered Traddles. "Who can forget it!"

"But even that is not all," said I. "During the last fortnight, some new trouble has vexed her; and she has been in and out of London every day. Several times she has gone out early, and been absent until evening. Last night, Traddles, with this journey before her, it was almost midnight before she came home. You know what her consideration for others is. She will not tell me what has happened to distress her."

My aunt, very pale, and with deep lines in her face, sat immovable until I had finished; when some stray tears found their way to her cheeks, and she put her hand on mine.

"It's nothing, Trot; it's nothing. There will be no more of it. You shall know by-and-by. Now, Agnes, my dear, let us attend to these affairs."

"I must do Mr. Micawber the justice to say," Traddles began, "that although he would appear not to have worked to any good account for himself, he is a most untiring man when he works for other people. I never saw such a fellow. If he always goes on in the same way, he must be, virtually, about two hundred years old, at present. The heat into which he has been continually putting himself; and the distracted and impetuous manner in which he has been diving, day and night, among papers and books; to say nothing of the immense number of letters he has written me between this house and Mr. Wickfield's, and often across the table when he has been sitting opposite, and might much more easily have spoken; is quite extraordinary."

"Letters!" cried my aunt. "I believe he dreams in letters!"

"There's Mr. Dick, too," said Traddles, "has been doing wonders! As soon as he was released from overlooking Uriah Heep, whom he kept in such charge as *I* never saw exceeded, he began to devote himself to Mr. Wickfield. And really his anxiety to be of use in the investigations we have been making, and his real usefulness in extracting, and copying, and fetching, and carrying, have been quite stimulating to us."

"Dick is a very remarkable man," exclaimed my aunt; "and I always said he was. Trot, you know it!"

"I am happy to say, Miss Wickfield," pursued Traddles, at once with great delicacy and with great earnestness, "that in your absence Mr. Wickfield has considerably improved. Relieved of the incubus that had fastened upon him for so long a time, and of the dreadful apprehensions under which he had lived, he is hardly the same person. At times, even his impaired power of concentrating his memory and attention on particular points of business, has recovered itself very much; and he has been able to assist us in making some things clear, that we should have found very difficult indeed, if not hopeless, without him. But, what I have

to do is to come to results; which are short enough; not to gossip on all the hopeful circumstances I have observed, or I shall never have done."

His natural manner and agreeable simplicity made it transparent that he said this to put us in good heart, and to enable Agnes to hear her father mentioned with greater confidence; but it was not the less pleasant for that.

"Now, let me see," said Traddles, looking among the papers on the table. "Having counted our funds, and reduced to order a great mass of unintentional confusion in the first place, and of wilful confusion and falsification in the second, we take it to be clear that Mr. Wickfield might now wind up his business, and his agency-trust, and exhibit no deficiency or defalcation whatever."

"Oh, thank Heaven!" cried Agnes, fervently.

"But," said Traddles, "the surplus that would be left as his means of support—and I suppose the house to be sold, even in saying this—would be so small, not exceeding in all probability some hundreds of pounds, that perhaps, Miss Wickfield, it would be best to consider whether he might not retain his agency of the estate to which he has so long been receiver. His friends might advise him, you know; now he is free. You yourself, Miss Wickfield—Copperfield—I——"

"I have considered it, Trotwood," said Agnes, looking to me, "and I feel that it ought not to be, and must not be; even on the recommendation of a friend to whom I am so grateful, and owe so much."

"I will not say that I recommend it," observed Traddles. "I think it right to suggest it. No more."

"I am happy to hear you say so," answered Agnes, steadily, "for it gives me hope, almost assurance, that we think alike. Dear Mr. Traddles and dear Trotwood, papa once free with honour, what could I wish for! I have always aspired, if I could have released him from the toils in which he was held, to render back some little portion of the love and care I owe him, and to devote my life to him. It has been, for years, the utmost height of my hopes. To take our future on myself, will be the next great happiness—the next to his release from all trust and responsibility—that I can know."

"Have you thought how, Agnes?"

"Often! I am not afraid, dear Trotwood. I am certain

of success. So many people know me here, and think kindly of me, that I am certain. Don't mistrust me. Our wants are not many. If I rent the dear old house, and keep a school, I shall be useful and happy."

The calm fervour of her cheerful voice brought back so vividly, first the dear old house itself, and then my solitary home, that my heart was too full for speech. Traddles pretended for a little while to be busily looking among the papers.

"Next, Miss Trotwood," said Traddles, "that property of yours."

"Well, Sir," sighed my aunt. "All I have got to say about it, is, that if it's gone, I can bear it; and if it's not gone, I shall be glad to get it back."

"It was originally, I think, eight thousand pounds, Consols?" said Traddles.

"Right!" replied my aunt.

"I can't account for more than five," said Traddles, with an air of perplexity.

"—Thousand, do you mean?" inquired my aunt, with uncommon composure, "or pounds?"

"Five thousand pounds," said Traddles.

"It was all there was," returned my aunt. "I sold three, myself. One, I paid for your articles, Trot, my dear; and the other two I have by me. When I lost the rest, I thought it wise to say nothing about that sum, but to keep it secretly for a rainy day. I wanted to see how you would come out of the trial, Trot; and you came out nobly—persevering, self-reliant, self-denying! So did Dick. Don't speak to me, for I find my nerves a little shaken!"

Nobody would have thought so, to see her sitting upright, with her arms folded; but she had wonderful self-command.

"Then I am delighted to say," cried Traddles, beaming with joy, "that we have recovered the whole money!"

"Don't congratulate me, anybody!" exclaimed my aunt. "How so, Sir?"

"You believed it had been misappropriated by Mr. Wickfield?" said Traddles.

"Of course I did," said my aunt, "and was therefore easily silenced. Agnes, not a word!"

"And indeed," said Traddles, "it was sold, by virtue of

the power of management he held from you; but I needn't say by whom sold, or on whose actual signature. It was afterwards pretended to Mr. Wickfield, by that rascal,—and proved, too, by figures,—that he had possessed himself of the money (on general instructions, *he* said) to keep other deficiencies and difficulties from the light. Mr. Wickfield, being so weak and helpless in his hands as to pay you, afterwards, several sums of interest on a pretended principal which he knew did not exist, made himself, unhappily, a party to the fraud."

"And at last took the blame upon himself," added my aunt; "and wrote me a mad letter, charging himself with robbery, and wrong unheard of. Upon which I paid him a visit early one morning, called for a candle, burnt the letter, and told him if he ever could right me and himself, to do it; and if he couldn't, to keep his own counsel for his daughter's sake.—If anybody speaks to me, I'll leave the house!"

We all remained quiet; Agnes covering her face.

"Well, my dear friend," said my aunt, after a pause, "and you have really extorted the money back from him?"

"Why, the fact is," returned Traddles, "Mr. Micawber had so completely hemmed him in, and was always ready with so many new points if an old one failed, that he could not escape from us. A most remarkable circumstance is, that I really don't think he grasped this sum even so much for the gratification of his avarice, which was inordinate, as in the hatred he felt for Copperfield. He said so to me, plainly. He said he would even have spent as much, to baulk or injure Copperfield."

"Ha!" said my aunt, knitting her brows thoughtfully, and glancing at Agnes. "And what's become of him?"

"I don't know. He left here," said Traddles, "with his mother, who had been clamouring, and beseeching, and disclosing, the whole time. They went away by one of the London night coaches, and I know no more about him; except that his malevolence to me at parting was audacious. He seemed to consider himself hardly less indebted to me, than to Mr. Micawber; which I consider (as I told him) quite a compliment."

"Do you suppose he has any money, Traddles?" I asked.

"Oh dear, yes, I should think so," he replied, shaking

his head, seriously. "I should say he must have pocketed a good deal, in one way or other. But, I think you would find, Copperfield, if you had an opportunity of observing his course, that money would never keep that man out of mischief. He is such an incarnate hypocrite, that whatever object he pursues, he must pursue crookedly. It's his only compensation for the outward restraints he puts upon himself. Always creeping along the ground to some small end or other, he will always magnify every object in the way; and consequently will hate and suspect everybody that comes, in the most innocent manner, between him and it. So, the crooked courses will become crookeder, at any moment, for the least reason, or for none. It's only necessary to consider his history here," said Traddles, "to know that."

"He's a monster of meanness!" said my aunt.

"Really I don't know about that," observed Traddles, thoughtfully. "Many people can be very mean, when they give their minds to it."

"And now, touching Mr. Micawber," said my aunt.

"Well, really," said Traddles, cheerfully, "I must, once more, give Mr. Micawber high praise. But for his having been so patient and persevering for so long a time, we never could have hoped to do anything worth speaking of. And I think we ought to consider that Mr. Micawber did right, for right's sake, when we reflect what terms he might have made with Uriah Heep himself, for his silence."

"I think so too," said I.

"Now, what would you give him?" inquired my aunt.

"Oh! Before you come to that," said Traddles, a little disconcerted, "I am afraid I thought it discreet to omit (not being able to carry everything before me) two points, in making this lawless adjustment—for it's perfectly lawless from beginning to end—of a difficult affair. Those I O U's, and so forth, which Mr. Micawber gave him for the advances he had——"

"Well! They must be paid," said my aunt.

"Yes, but I don't know when they may be proceeded on, or where they are," rejoined Traddles, opening his eyes; "and I anticipate, that, between this time and his departure, Mr. Micawber will be constantly arrested, or taken in execution."

"Then he must be constantly set free again, and taken

out of execution," said my aunt. "What's the amount altogether?"

"Why, Mr. Micawber has entered the transactions—he calls them transactions—with great form, in a book," rejoined Traddles, smiling; "and he makes the amount a hundred and three pounds, five."

"Now, what shall we give him, that sum included?" said my aunt. "Agnes, my dear, you and I can talk about division of it afterwards. What should it be? Five hundred pounds?"

Upon this, Traddles and I both struck in at once. We both recommended a small sum in money, and the payment, without stipulation to Mr. Micawber, of the Uriah claims as they came in. We proposed that the family should have their passage and their outfit, and a hundred pounds; and that Mr. Micawber's arrangement for the repayment of the advances should be gravely entered into, as it might be wholesome for him to suppose himself under that responsibility. To this, I added the suggestion, that I should give some explanation of his character and history to Mr. Peggotty, who I knew could be relied on; and that to Mr. Peggotty should be quietly entrusted the discretion of advancing another hundred. I further proposed to interest Mr. Micawber in Mr. Peggotty, by confiding so much of Mr. Peggotty's story to him as I might feel justified in relating, or might think expedient; and to endeavour to bring each of them to bear upon the other, for the common advantage. We all entered warmly into these views; and I may mention at once, that the principals themselves did so, shortly afterwards, with perfect good-will and harmony.

Seeing that Traddles now glanced anxiously at my aunt again, I reminded him of the second and last point to which he had adverted.

"You and your aunt will excuse me, Copperfield, if I touch upon a painful theme, as I greatly fear I shall," said Traddles, hesitating; "but I think it necessary to bring it to your recollection. On the day of Mr. Micawber's memorable denunciation, a threatening allusion was made by Uriah Heep to your aunt's—husband."

My aunt, retaining her stiff position, and apparent composure, assented with a nod.

"Perhaps," observed Traddles, "it was mere purposeless impertinence?"

"No," returned my aunt.

"There was—pardon me—really such a person, and at all in his power?" hinted Traddles.

"Yes, my good friend," said my aunt.

Traddles, with a perceptible lengthening of his face, explained that he had not been able to approach this subject; that it had shared the fate of Mr. Micawber's liabilities, in not being comprehended in the terms he had made; that we were no longer of any authority with Uriah Heep; and that if he could do us, or any of us, any injury or annoyance, no doubt he would.

My aunt remained quiet; until again some stray tears found their way to her cheeks.

"You are quite right," she said. "It was very thoughtful to mention it."

"Can I—or Copperfield—do anything?" asked Traddles gently.

"Nothing," said my aunt. "I thank you many times. Trot, my dear, a vain threat! Let us have Mr. and Mrs. Micawber back. And don't any of you speak to me!" With that, she smoothed her dress, and sat, with her upright carriage, looking at the door.

"Well, Mr. and Mrs. Micawber!" said my aunt, when they entered. "We have been discussing your emigration, with many apologies to you for keeping you out of the room so long; and I'll tell you what arrangements we propose."

These she explained, to the unbounded satisfaction of the family,—children and all being then present,—and so much to the awakening of Mr. Micawber's punctual habits in the opening stage of all bill transactions, that he could not be dissuaded from immediately rushing out, in the highest spirits, to buy the stamps for his notes of hand. But, his joy received a sudden check; for within five minutes, he returned in the custody of a sheriff's officer, informing us, in a flood of tears, that all was lost. We, being quite prepared for this event, which was of course a proceeding of Uriah Heep's, soon paid the money; and in five minutes more Mr. Micawber was seated at the table, filling up the stamps with an expression of perfect joy, which only that congenial employment, or the making of punch, could impart in full completeness to his shining face. To see him at work on the stamps, with the relish of an artist, touching them like pictures, looking at them sideways, taking

weighty notes of dates and amounts in his pocket-book, and contemplating them when finished, with a high sense of their precious value, was a sight indeed.

"Now, the best thing you can do, Sir, if you'll allow me to advise you," said my aunt, after silently observing him, "is to abjure that occupation for evermore."

"Madam," replied Mr. Micawber, "it is my intention to register such a vow on the virgin page of the future. Mrs. Micawber will attest it. I trust," said Mr. Micawber, solemnly, "that my son Wilkins will ever bear in mind, that he had infinitely better put his fist in the fire, than use it to handle the serpents that have poisoned the life-blood of his unhappy parent!" Deeply affected, and changed in a moment to the image of despair, Mr. Micawber regarded the serpents with a look of gloomy abhorrence (in which his late admiration of them was not quite subdued), folded them up, and put them in his pocket.

This closed the proceedings of the evening. We were weary with sorrow and fatigue, and my aunt and I were to return to London on the morrow. It was arranged that the Micawbers should follow us, after effecting a sale of their goods to a broker; that Mr. Wickfield's affairs should be brought to a settlement, with all convenient speed, under the direction of Traddles; and that Agnes should also come to London, pending those arrangements. We passed the night at the old house, which, freed from the presence of the Heeps, seemed purged of a disease; and I lay in my old room, like a shipwrecked wanderer come home.

We went back next day to my aunt's house—not to mine; and when she and I sat alone, as of old, before going to bed, she said:

"Trot, do you really wish to know what I have had upon my mind lately?"

"Indeed I do, aunt. If there ever was a time when I felt unwilling that you should have a sorrow or anxiety which I could not share, it is now."

"You have had sorrow enough, child," said my aunt, affectionately, "without the addition of *my* little miseries. I could have no other motive, Trot, in keeping anything from you."

"I know that well," said I. "But tell me now."

"Would you ride with me a little way to-morrow morning?" asked my aunt.

"Of course."

"At nine," said she. "I'll tell you then, my dear."

At nine, accordingly, we went out in a little chariot, and drove to London. We drove a long way through the streets, until we came to one of the large hospitals. Standing hard by the building was a plain hearse. The driver recognised my aunt, and, in obedience to a motion of her hand at the window, drove slowly off; we following.

"You understand it now, Trot," said my aunt. "He is gone!"

"Did he die in the hospital?"

"Yes."

She sat immovable beside me; but, again I saw the stray tears on her face.

"He was there once before," said my aunt presently. "He was ailing a long time—a shattered, broken man, these many years. When he knew his state in this last illness, he asked them to send for me. He was sorry then. Very sorry."

"You went, I know, aunt."

"I went. I was with him a good deal afterwards."

"He died the night before we went to Canterbury?" said I.

My aunt nodded. "No one can harm him now," she said. "It was a vain threat."

We drove away, out of town, to the churchyard at Hornsey. "Better here than in the streets," said my aunt. "He was born here."

We alighted; and followed the plain coffin to a corner I remember well, where the service was read consigning it to the dust.

"Six-and-thirty years ago, this day, my dear," said my aunt, as we walked back to the chariot, "I was married. God forgive us all!"

We took our seats in silence; and so she sat beside me for a long time, holding my hand. At length she suddenly burst into tears, and said:

"He was a fine-looking man when I married him, Trot—and he was sadly changed!"

It did not last long. After the relief of tears, she soon became composed, and even cheerful. Her nerves were a little shaken, she said, or she would not have given way to it. God forgive us all!

So we rode back to her little cottage at Highgate, where

we found the following short note, which had arrived by that morning's post from Mr. Micawber:—

"Canterbury,
"Friday.

"My dear Madam, and Copperfield,

"The fair land of promise lately looming on the horizon is again enveloped in impenetrable mists, and for ever withdrawn from the eyes of a drifting wretch whose Doom is sealed!

"Another writ has been issued (in His Majesty's High Court of King's Bench at Westminster), in another cause of HEEP *v.* MICAWBER, and the defendant in that cause is the prey of the sheriff having legal jurisdiction in this bailiwick.

"'Now's the day, and now's the hour,
See the front of battle lower,
See approach proud EDWARD'S power—
Chains and slavery!'

Consigned to which, and to a speedy end (for mental torture is not supportable beyond a certain point, and that point I feel I have attained), my course is run. Bless you, bless you! Some future traveller, visiting, from motives of curiosity, not unmingled, let us hope, with sympathy, the place of confinement allotted to debtors in this city, may, and I trust will, Ponder, as he traces on its wall, inscribed with a rusty nail,

"The obscure initials
"W. M.

"P.S. I re-open this to say that our common friend, Mr. Thomas Traddles (who has not yet left us, and is looking extremely well), has paid the debt and costs, in the noble name of Miss Trotwood; and that myself and family are at the height of earthly bliss."

CHAPTER LV.

TEMPEST.

I NOW approach an event in my life, so indelible, so awful, so bound by an infinite variety of ties to all that has preceded it, in these pages, that, from the beginning of my narrative, I have seen it growing larger and larger as I advanced, like a great tower in a plain, and throwing its fore-cast shadow even on the incidents of my childish days.

For years after it occurred, I dreamed of it often. I have started up so vividly impressed by it, that its fury has yet seemed raging in my quiet room, in the still night. I dream of it sometimes, though at lengthened and uncertain intervals, to this hour. I have an association between it and a stormy wind, or the lightest mention of a sea-shore, as strong as any of which my mind is conscious. As plainly as I behold what happened, I will try to write it down. I do not recall it, but see it done; for it happens again before me.

The time drawing on rapidly for the sailing of the emigrant-ship, my good old nurse (almost broken-hearted for me, when we first met) came up to London. I was constantly with her, and her brother, and the Micawbers (they being very much together); but Emily I never saw.

One evening when the time was close at hand, I was alone with Peggotty and her brother. Our conversation turned on Ham. She described to us how tenderly he had taken leave of her, and how manfully and quietly he had borne himself. Most of all, of late, when she believed he was most tried. It was a subject of which the affectionate creature never tired; and our interest in hearing the many examples which she, who was so much with him, had to relate, was equal to hers in relating them.

My aunt and I were at that time vacating the two cottages at Highgate; I intending to go abroad, and she to return to her house at Dover. We had a temporary lodging in Covent Garden. As I walked home to it, after this evening's conversation, reflecting on what had passed be-

tween Ham and myself when I was last at Yarmouth, I wavered in the original purpose I had formed, of leaving a letter for Emily when I should take leave of her uncle on board the ship, and thought it would be better to write to her now. She might desire, I thought, after receiving my communication, to send some parting word by me to her unhappy lover. I ought to give her the opportunity.

I therefore sat down in my room, before going to bed, and wrote to her. I told her that I had seen him, and that he had requested me to tell her what I have already written in its place in these sheets. I faithfully repeated it. I had no need to enlarge upon it, if I had had the right. Its deep fidelity and goodness were not to be adorned by me or any man. I left it out, to be sent round in the morning; with a line to Mr. Peggotty, requesting him to give it to her; and went to bed at daybreak.

I was weaker than I knew then; and, not falling asleep until the sun was up, lay late, and unrefreshed, next day. I was roused by the silent presence of my aunt at my bedside. I felt it in my sleep, as I suppose we all do feel such things.

"Trot, my dear," she said, when I opened my eyes, "I couldn't make up my mind to disturb you. Mr. Peggotty is here; shall he come up?"

I replied yes, and he soon appeared.

"Mas'r Davy," he said, when we had shaken hands, "I giv Em'ly your letter, Sir, and she writ this heer; and begged of me fur to ask you to read it, and if you see no hurt in't, to be so kind as take charge on't."

"Have you read it?" said I.

He nodded sorrowfully. I opened it, and read as follows:—

"I have got your message. Oh, what can I write, to thank you for your good and blessed kindness to me!

"I have put the words close to my heart. I shall keep them till I die. They are sharp thorns, but they are such comfort. I have prayed over them, oh, I have prayed so much. When I find what you are, and what uncle is, I think what God must be, and can cry to Him.

"Good bye for ever. Now, my dear, my friend, good bye for ever in this world. In another world, if I am forgiven, I may wake a child and come to you. All thanks and blessings. Farewell, evermore!"

This, blotted with tears, was the letter.

"May I tell her as you doen't see no hurt in't, and as you'll be so kind as take charge on't, Mas'r Davy?" said Mr. Peggotty, when I had read it.

"Unquestionably," said I—"but I am thinking——"

"Yes, Mas'r Davy?"

"I am thinking," said I, "that I'll go down again to Yarmouth. There's time, and to spare, for me to go and come back before the ship sails. My mind is constantly running on him, in his solitude; to put this letter of her writing in his hand at this time, and to enable you to tell her, in the moment of parting, that he has got it, will be a kindness to both of them. I solemnly accepted his commission, dear good fellow, and cannot discharge it too completely. The journey is nothing to me. I am restless, and shall be better in motion. I'll go down to-night."

Though he anxiously endeavoured to dissuade me, I saw that he was of my mind; and this, if I had required to be confirmed in my intention, would have had the effect. He went round to the coach-office, at my request, and took the box-seat for me on the mail. In the evening I started, by that conveyance, down the road I had traversed under so many vicissitudes.

"Don't you think that," I asked the coachman, in the first stage out of London, "a very remarkable sky? I don't remember to have seen one like it."

"Nor I—not equal to it," he replied. "That's wind, Sir. There'll be mischief done at sea, I expect, before long."

It was a murky confusion—here and there blotted with a colour like the colour of the smoke from damp fuel—of flying clouds tossed up into most remarkable heaps, suggesting greater heights in the clouds than there were depths below them to the bottom of the deepest hollows in the earth, through which the wild moon seemed to plunge headlong, as if, in a dread disturbance of the laws of nature, she had lost her way and were frightened. There had been a wind all day; and it was rising then, with an extraordinary great sound. In another hour it had much increased, and the sky was more overcast, and blew hard.

But as the night advanced, the clouds closing in and densely overspreading the whole sky, then very dark, it came on to blow, harder and harder. It still increased, until our horses could scarcely face the wind. Many times, in the dark part of the night (it was then late in September,

when the nights were not short), the leaders turned about, or came to a dead stop; and we were often in serious apprehension that the coach would be blown over. Sweeping gusts of rain came up before this storm, like showers of steel; and, at those times, when there was any shelter of trees or lee walls to be got, we were fain to stop, in a sheer impossibility of continuing the struggle.

When the day broke, it blew harder and harder. I had been in Yarmouth when the seamen said it blew great guns, but I had never known the like of this, or anything approaching to it. We came to Ipswich—very late, having had to fight every inch of ground since we were ten miles out of London; and found a cluster of people in the market-place, who had risen from their beds in the night, fearful of falling chimneys. Some of these, congregating about the inn-yard while we changed horses, told us of great sheets of lead having been ripped off a high church-tower, and flung into a by-street, which they then blocked up. Others had to tell of country people, coming in from neighbouring villages, who had seen great trees lying torn out of the earth, and whole ricks scattered about the roads and fields. Still, there was no abatement in the storm, but it blew harder.

As we struggled on, nearer and nearer to the sea, from which this mighty wind was blowing dead on shore, its force became more and more terrific. Long before we saw the sea, its spray was on our lips, and showered salt rain upon us. The water was out, over miles and miles of the flat country adjacent to Yarmouth; and every sheet and puddle lashed its banks, and had its stress of little breakers setting heavily towards us. When we came within sight of the sea, the waves on the horizon, caught at intervals above the rolling abyss, were like glimpses of another shore with towers and buildings. When at last we got into the town, the people came out to their doors, all aslant, and with streaming hair, making a wonder of the mail that had come through such a night.

I put up at the old inn, and went down to look at the sea; staggering along the street, which was strewn with sand and sea-weed, and with flying blotches of sea-foam; afraid of falling slates and tiles; and holding by people I met, at angry corners. Coming near the beach, I saw, not only the boatmen, but half the people of the town, lurking behind buildings; some, now and then braving the fury of

the storm to look away to sea, and blown sheer out of their course in trying to get zigzag back.

Joining these groups, I found bewailing women whose husbands were away in herring or oyster boats, which there was too much reason to think might have foundered before they could run in anywhere for safety. Grizzled old sailors were among the people, shaking their heads, as they looked from water to sky, and muttering to one another; shipowners, excited and uneasy; children, huddling together, and peering into older faces; even stout mariners, disturbed and anxious, levelling their glasses at the sea from behind places of shelter, as if they were surveying an enemy.

The tremendous sea itself, when I could find sufficient pause to look at it, in the agitation of the blinding wind, the flying stones and sand, and the awful noise, confounded me. As the high watery walls came rolling in, and, at their highest, tumbled into surf, they looked as if the least would engulf the town. As the receding wave swept back with a hoarse roar, it seemed to scoop out deep caves in the beach, as if its purpose were to undermine the earth. When some white-headed billows thundered on, and dashed themselves to pieces before they reached the land, every fragment of the late whole seemed possessed by the full might of its wrath, rushing to be gathered to the composition of another monster. Undulating hills were changed to valleys, undulating valleys (with a solitary storm-bird sometimes skimming through them) were lifted up to hills; masses of water shivered and shook the beach with a booming sound; every shape tumultuously rolled on, as soon as made, to change its shape and place, and beat another shape and place away; the ideal shore on the horizon, with its towers and buildings, rose and fell; the clouds flew fast and thick; I seemed to see a rending and upheaving of all nature.

Not finding Ham among the people whom this memorable wind—for it is still remembered down there, as the greatest ever known to blow upon that coast—had brought together, I made my way to his house. It was shut; and as no one answered to my knocking, I went, by back ways and by-lanes, to the yard where he worked. I learned, there, that he had gone to Lowestoft, to meet some sudden exigency of ship-repairing in which his skill was required; but that he would be back to-morrow morning, in good time.

I went back to the inn; and when I had washed and

dressed, and tried to sleep, but in vain, it was five o'clock in the afternoon. I had not sat five minutes by the coffee-room fire, when the waiter coming to stir it, as an excuse for talking, told me that two colliers had gone down, with all hands, a few miles away; and that some other ships had been seen labouring hard in the Roads, and trying, in great distress, to keep off shore. Mercy on them, and on all poor sailors, said he, if we had another night like the last!

I was very much depressed in spirits; very solitary; and felt an uneasiness in Ham's not being there, disproportionate to the occasion. I was seriously affected, without knowing how much, by late events; and my long exposure to the fierce wind had confused me. There was that jumble in my thoughts and recollections, that I had lost the clear arrangement of time and distance. Thus, if I had gone out into the town, I should not have been surprised, I think, to encounter some one who I knew must be then in London. So to speak, there was in these respects a curious inattention in my mind. Yet it was busy, too, with all the remembrances the place naturally awakened; and they were particularly distinct and vivid.

In this state, the waiter's dismal intelligence about the ships immediately connected itself, without any effort of my volition, with my uneasiness about Ham. I was persuaded that I had an apprehension of his returning from Lowestoft by sea, and being lost. This grew so strong with me, that I resolved to go back to the yard before I took my dinner, and ask the boat-builder if he thought his attempting to return by sea at all likely? If he gave me the least reason to think so, I would go over to Lowestoft and prevent it by bringing him with me.

I hastily ordered my dinner, and went back to the yard. I was none too soon; for the boat-builder, with a lantern in his hand, was locking the yard-gate. He quite laughed, when I asked him the question, and said there was no fear; no man in his senses, or out of them, would put off in such a gale of wind, least of all Ham Peggotty, who had been born to seafaring.

So sensible of this, beforehand, that I had really felt ashamed of doing what I was nevertheless impelled to do, I went back to the inn. If such a wind could rise, I think it was rising. The howl and roar, the rattling of the doors

and windows, the rumbling in the chimneys, the apparent rocking of the very house that sheltered me, and the prodigious tumult of the sea, were more fearful than in the morning. But there was now a great darkness besides; and that invested the storm with new terrors, real and fanciful.

I could not eat, I could not sit still, I could not continue steadfast to anything. Something within me, faintly answering to the storm without, tossed up the depths of my memory, and made a tumult in them. Yet, in all the hurry of my thoughts, wild running with the thundering sea,—the storm, and my uneasiness regarding Ham, were always in the foreground.

My dinner went away almost untasted, and I tried to refresh myself with a glass or two of wine. In vain. I fell into a dull slumber before the fire, without losing my consciousness, either of the uproar out of doors, or of the place in which I was. Both became overshadowed by a new and indefinable horror; and when I awoke—or rather when I shook off the lethargy that bound me in my chair—my whole frame thrilled with objectless and unintelligible fear.

I walked to and fro, tried to read an old gazetteer, listened to the awful noises: looked at faces, scenes, and figures in the fire. At length, the steady ticking of the undisturbed clock on the wall tormented me to that degree that I resolved to go to bed.

It was reassuring, on such a night, to be told that some of the inn-servants had agreed together to sit up until morning. I went to bed, exceedingly weary and heavy; but, on my lying down, all such sensations vanished, as if by magic, and I was broad awake, with every sense refined.

For hours I lay there, listening to the wind and water; imagining, now, that I heard shrieks out at sea; now, that I distinctly heard the firing of signal guns; and now, the fall of houses in the town. I got up, several times, and looked out; but could see nothing, except the reflection in the window-panes of the faint candle I had left burning, and of my own haggard face looking in at me from the black void.

At length, my restlessness attained to such a pitch, that I hurried on my clothes, and went down stairs. In the large kitchen, where I dimly saw bacon and ropes of onions hanging from the beams, the watchers were clustered together, in various attitudes, about a table, purposely moved

away from the great chimney, and brought near the door. A pretty girl, who had her ears stopped with her apron, and her eyes upon the door, screamed when I appeared, supposing me to be a spirit; but the others had more presence of mind, and were glad of an addition to their company. One man, referring to the topic they had been discussing, asked me whether I thought the souls of the collier-crews who had gone down, were out in the storm?

I remained there, I dare say, two hours. Once, I opened the yard-gate, and looked into the empty street. The sand, the sea-weed, and the flakes of foam, were driving by; and I was obliged to call for assistance before I could shut the gate again, and make it fast against the wind.

There was a dark gloom in my solitary chamber, when I at length returned to it; but I was tired now, and, getting into bed again, fell—off a tower and down a precipice—into the depths of sleep. I have an impression that for a long time, though I dreamed of being elsewhere and in a variety of scenes, it was always blowing in my dream. At length, I lost that feeble hold upon reality, and was engaged with two dear friends, but who they were I don't know, at the siege of some town in a roar of cannonading.

The thunder of the cannon was so loud and incessant, that I could not hear something I much desired to hear, until I made a great exertion and awoke. It was broad day—eight or nine o'clock; the storm raging, in lieu of the batteries; and some one knocking and calling at my door.

"What is the matter?" I cried.

"A wreck! Close by!"

I sprang out of bed, and asked, what wreck?

"A schooner, from Spain or Portugal, laden with fruit and wine. Make haste, Sir, if you want to see her! It's thought, down on the beach, she'll go to pieces every moment."

The excited voice went clamouring along the staircase; and I wrapped myself in my clothes as quickly as I could, and ran into the street.

Numbers of people were there before me, all running in one direction, to the beach. I ran the same way, outstripping a good many, and soon came facing the wild sea.

The wind might by this time have lulled a little, though not more sensibly than if the cannonading I had dreamed of, had been diminished by the silencing of half-a-dozen

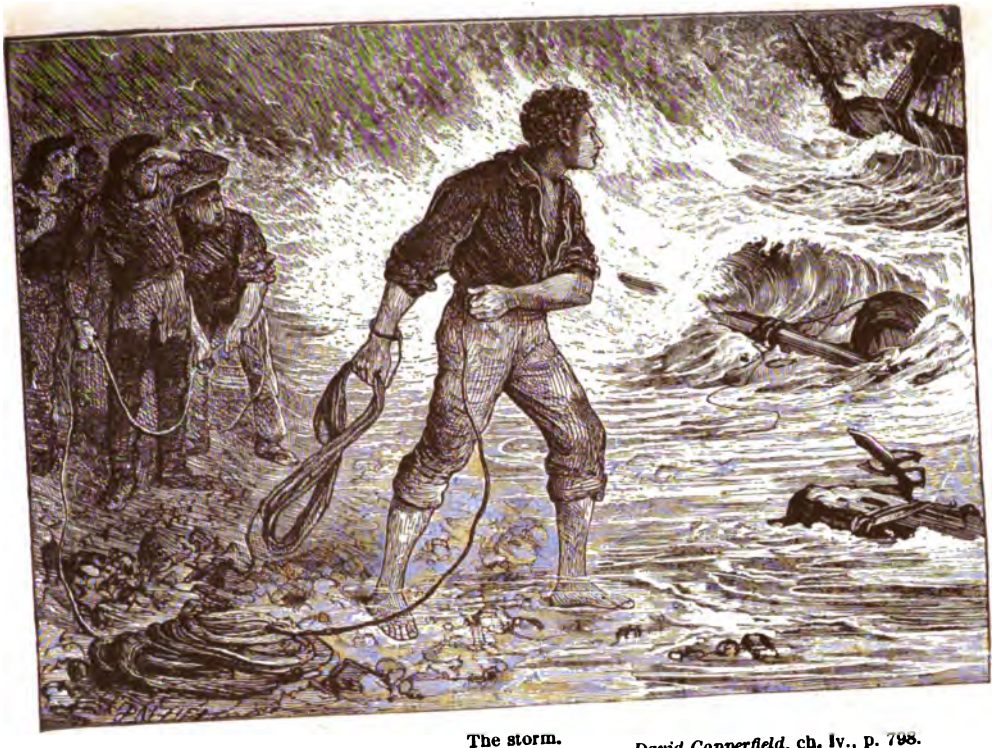
guns out of hundreds. But, the sea, having upon it the additional agitation of the whole night, was infinitely more terrific than when I had seen it last. Every appearance it had then presented, bore the expression of being *swelled;* and the height to which the breakers rose, and, looking over one another, bore one another down, and rolled in, in interminable hosts, was most appalling.

In the difficulty of hearing anything but wind and waves, and in the crowd, and the unspeakable confusion, and my first breathless efforts to stand against the weather, I was so confused that I looked out to sea for the wreck, and saw nothing but the foaming heads of the great waves. A half-dressed boatman, standing next me, pointed with his bare arm (a tattoo'd arrow on it, pointing in the same direction) to the left. Then, O great Heaven, I saw it, close in upon us!

One mast was broken short off, six or eight feet from the deck, and lay over the side, entangled in a maze of sail and rigging; and all that ruin, as the ship rolled and beat—which she did without a moment's pause, and with a violence quite inconceivable—beat the side as if it would stave it in. Some efforts were even then being made, to cut this portion of the wreck away; for, as the ship, which was broadside on, turned towards us in her rolling, I plainly descried her people at work with axes, especially one active figure with long curling hair, conspicuous among the rest. But, a great cry, which was audible even above the wind and water, rose from the shore at this moment; the sea, sweeping over the rolling wreck, made a clean breach, and carried men, spars, casks, planks, bulwarks, heaps of such toys, into the boiling surge.

The second mast was yet standing, with the rags of a rent sail, and a wild confusion of broken cordage flapping to and fro. The ship had struck once, the same boatman hoarsely said in my ear, and then lifted in and struck again. I understood him to add that she was parting amidships, and I could readily suppose so, for the rolling and beating were too tremendous for any human work to suffer long. As he spoke, there was another great cry of pity from the beach; four men arose with the wreck out of the deep, clinging to the rigging of the remaining mast; uppermost, the active figure with the curling hair.

There was a bell on board; and as the ship rolled and dashed, like a desperate creature driven mad, now showing



The storm. —*David Copperfield*, ch. lv., p. 798.

us the whole sweep of her deck, as she turned on her beam-ends towards the shore, now nothing but her keel, as she sprang wildly over and turned towards the sea, the bell rang; and its sound, the knell of those unhappy men, was borne towards us on the wind. Again we lost her, and again she rose. Two men were gone. The agony on shore increased. Men groaned, and clasped their hands; women shrieked, and turned away their faces. Some ran wildly up and down along the beach, crying for help where no help could be. I found myself one of these, frantically imploring a knot of sailors whom I knew, not to let those two lost creatures perish before our eyes.

They were making out to me, in an agitated way—I don't know how, for the little I could hear I was scarcely composed enough to understand—that the life-boat had been bravely manned an hour ago, and could do nothing; and that as no man would be so desperate as to attempt to wade off with a rope, and establish a communication with the shore, there was nothing left to try; when I noticed that some new sensation moved the people on the beach, and saw them part, and Ham come breaking through them to the front.

I ran to him—as well as I know, to repeat my appeal for help. But, distracted though I was, by a sight so new to me and terrible, the determination in his face, and his look, out to sea—exactly the same look as I remembered in connexion with the morning after Emily's flight—awoke me to a knowledge of his danger. I held him back with both arms; and implored the men with whom I had been speaking, not to listen to him, not to do murder, not to let him stir from off that sand!

Another cry arose on shore; and looking to the wreck, we saw the cruel sail, with blow on blow, beat off the lower of the two men, and fly up in triumph round the active figure left alone upon the mast.

Against such a sight, and against such determination as that of the calmly desperate man who was already accustomed to lead half the people present, I might as hopefully have entreated the wind. "Mas'r Davy," he said, cheerily grasping me by both hands, "if my time is come, 'tis come. If 'tan't, I'll bide it. Lord above bless you, and bless all! Mates, make me ready! I'm a going off!"

I was swept away, but not unkindly, to some distance,

where the people around me made me stay; urgi
confusedly perceived, that he was bent on going, with h
or without, and that I should endanger the precautions for
his safety by troubling those with whom they rested. I
don't know what I answered, or what they rejoined; but,
I saw hurry on the beach, and men running with ropes from
a capstan that was there, and penetrating into a circle of
figures that hid him from me. Then, I saw him standing
alone, in a seaman's frock and trowsers: a rope in his hand,
or slung to his wrist: another round his body; and several
of the best men holding, at a little distance, to the latter,
which he laid out himself, slack upon the shore, at his feet.
The wreck, even to my unpractised eye, was breaking up.
I saw that she was parting in the middle, and that the life
of the solitary man upon the mast hung by a thread. Still,
he clung to it. He had a singular red cap on,—not like a
sailor's cap, but of a finer colour; and as the few yielding
planks between him and destruction rolled and bulged, and
his anticipative death-knell rang, he was seen by all of us
to wave it. I saw him do it now, and thought I was going
distracted, when his action brought an old remembrance to
my mind of a once dear friend.
Ham watched the sea, standing alone, with the silence
of suspended breath behind him, and the storm before, until
there was a great retiring wave, when, with a backward
glance at those who held the rope which was made fas
round his body, he dashed in after it, and in a moment wa
buffeting with the water; rising with the hills, falling wit
the valleys, lost beneath the foam; then drawn again
land.
They hauled in hastily.
He was hurt. I saw blood on his face, from where
stood; but he took no thought of that. He seemed hu
riedly to give them some directions for leaving him m
free—or so I judged from the motion of his arm—and w
Gone as before.
And now he made for the wreck, rising with the hi
falling with the valleys, lost beneath the rugged foam, bo
in towards the shore, borne on towards the ship, striv
hard and valiantly. The distance was nothing, but
power of the sea and wind made the strife deadly.
length he neared the wreck. He was so near, that
one more of his vigorous strokes he would be clinging t
—when, a high, green, vast hill-side of water, moving

shoreward, from beyond the ship, he seemed to leap up into it with a mighty bound, and the ship was gone!

Some eddying fragments I saw in the sea, as if a mere cask had been broken, in running to the spot where they were hauling in. Consternation was in every face. They drew him to my very feet—insensible—dead. He was carried to the nearest house; and, no one preventing me now, I remained near him, busy, while every means of restoration were tried; but he had been beaten to death by the great wave, and his generous heart was stilled for ever.

As I sat beside the bed, when hope was abandoned and all was done, a fisherman, who had known me when Emily and I were children, and ever since, whispered my name at the door.

"Sir," said he, with tears starting to his weather-beaten face, which, with his trembling lips, was ashy pale, "will you come over yonder?"

The old remembrance that had been recalled to me, was in his look. I asked him, terror-stricken, leaning on the arm he held out to support me:

"Has a body come ashore?"

He said, "Yes."

"Do I know it?" I asked then.

He answered nothing.

But, he led me to the shore. And on that part of it where she and I had looked for shells, two children—on that part of it where some lighter fragments of the old boat, blown down last night, had been scattered by the wind—among the ruins of the home he had wronged—I saw him lying with his head upon his arm, as I had often seen him lie at school.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE NEW WOUND, AND THE OLD.

No need, O Steerforth, to have said, when we last spoke together, in that hour which I so little deemed to be our parting-hour—no need to have said, "Think of me at my best!" I had done that ever; and could I change now, looking on this sight!

They brought a hand-bier, and laid him on it, and covered

him with a flag, and took him up and bore him on towards the houses. All the men who carried him had known him, and gone sailing with him, and seen him merry and bold. They carried him through the wild roar, a hush in the midst of all the tumult; and took him to the cottage where Death was already.

But, when they set the bier down on the threshold, they looked at one another, and at me, and whispered. I knew why. They felt as if it were not right to lay him down in the same quiet room.

We went into the town, and took our burden to the inn. So soon as I could at all collect my thoughts, I sent for Joram, and begged him to provide me a conveyance in which it could be got to London in the night. I knew that the care of it, and the hard duty of preparing his mother to receive it, could only rest with me; and I was anxious to discharge that duty as faithfully as I could.

I chose the night for the journey, that there might be less curiosity when I left the town. But, although it was nearly midnight when I came out of the yard in a chaise, followed by what I had in charge, there were many people waiting. At intervals, along the town, and even a little way out upon the road, I saw more; but at length only the bleak night and the open country were around me, and the ashes of my youthful friendship.

Upon a mellow autumn day, about noon, when the ground was perfumed by fallen leaves, and many more, in beautiful tints of yellow, red, and brown, yet hung upon the trees, through which the sun was shining, I arrived at Highgate. I walked the last mile, thinking as I went along of what I had to do; and left the carriage that had followed me all through the night, awaiting orders to advance.

The house, when I came up to it, looked just the same. Not a blind was raised; no sign of life was in the dull paved court, with its covered way leading to the disused door. The wind had quite gone down, and nothing moved.

I had not, at first, the courage to ring at the gate; and when I did ring, my errand seemed to me to be expressed in the very sound of the bell. The little parlour-maid came out, with the key in her hand; and looking earnestly at me as she unlocked the gate, said:

"I beg your pardon, Sir. Are you ill?"

"I have been much agitated, and am fatigued."

"Is anything the matter, Sir?—Mr. James——?"

"Hush!" said I. "Yes, something has happened, that I have to break to Mrs. Steerforth. She is at home?"

The girl anxiously replied that her mistress was very seldom out now, even in a carriage; that she kept her room; that she saw no company, but would see me. Her mistress was up, she said, and Miss Dartle was with her. What message should she take up stairs?

Giving her a strict charge to be careful of her manner, and only to carry in my card and say I waited, I sat down in the drawing-room (which we had now reached) until she should come back. Its former pleasant air of occupation was gone, and the shutters were half closed. The harp had not been used for many and many a day. His picture, as a boy, was there. The cabinet in which his mother had kept his letters was there. I wondered if she ever read them now; if she would ever read them more!

The house was so still that I heard the girl's light step up stairs. On her return, she brought a message, to the effect that Mrs. Steerforth was an invalid and could not come down; but, that if I would excuse her being in her chamber, she would be glad to see me. In a few moments I stood before her.

She was in his room; not in her own. I felt, of course, that she had taken to occupy it, in remembrance of him; and that the many tokens of his old sports and accomplishments, by which she was surrounded, remained there, just as he had left them, for the same reason. She murmured, however, even in her reception of me, that she was out of her own chamber because its aspect was unsuited to her infirmity; and with her stately look repelled the least suspicion of the truth.

At her chair, as usual, was Rosa Dartle. From the first moment of her dark eyes resting on me, I saw she knew I was the bearer of evil tidings. The scar sprang into view that instant. She withdrew herself a step behind the chair, to keep her own face out of Mrs. Steerforth's observation; and scrutinised me with a piercing gaze that never faltered, never shrank.

"I am sorry to observe you are in mourning, Sir," said Mrs. Steerforth.

"I am unhappily a widower," said I.

"You are very young to know so great a loss," she returned. "I am grieved to hear it. I am grieved to hear it. I hope Time will be good to you."

"I hope Time," said I, looking at her, "will be good to all of us. Dear Mrs. Steerforth, we must all trust to that, in our heaviest misfortunes."

The earnestness of my manner, and the tears in my eyes, alarmed her. The whole course of her thoughts appeared to stop, and change.

I tried to command my voice in gently saying his name, but it trembled. She repeated it to herself, two or three times, in a low tone. Then, addressing me, she said, with enforced calmness:

"My son is ill."

"Very ill."

"You have seen him?"

"I have."

"Are you reconciled?"

I could not say Yes, I could not say No. She slightly turned her head towards the spot where Rosa Dartle had been standing at her elbow, and in that moment I said, by the motion of my lips, to Rosa, "Dead!"

That Mrs. Steerforth might not be induced to look behind her, and read, plainly written, what she was not yet prepared to know, I met her look quickly; but I had seen Rosa Dartle throw her hands up in the air with vehemence of despair and horror, and then clasp them on her face.

The handsome lady—so like, Oh so like!—regarded me with a fixed look, and put her hand to her forehead. I besought her to be calm, and prepare herself to bear what I had to tell; but I should rather have entreated her to weep, for she sat like a stone figure.

"When I was last here," I faltered, "Miss Dartle told me he was sailing here and there. The night before last was a dreadful one at sea. If he were at sea that night, and near a dangerous coast, as it is said he was; and if the vessel that was seen should really be the ship which——"

"Rosa!" said Mrs. Steerforth, "come to me!"

She came, but with no sympathy or gentleness. Her eyes gleamed like fire as she confronted his mother, and broke into a frightful laugh.

"Now," she said, "is your pride appeased, you mad-

woman? *Now* has he made atonement to you——with his life? Do you hear?—His life!"

Mrs. Steerforth, fallen back stiffly in her chair, and making no sound but a moan, cast her eyes upon her with a wide stare.

"Ay!" cried Rosa, smiting herself passionately on the breast, "look at me! Moan, and groan, and look at me! Look here!" striking the scar, "at your dead child's handiwork!"

The moan the mother uttered, from time to time, went to my heart. Always the same. Always inarticulate and stifled. Always accompanied with an incapable motion of the head, but with no change of face. Always proceeding from a rigid mouth and closed teeth, as if the jaw were locked and the face frozen up in pain.

"Do you remember when he did this?" she proceeded. "Do you remember when, in his inheritance of your nature, and in your pampering of his pride and passion, he did this, and disfigured me for life? Look at me, marked until I die with his high displeasure; and moan and groan for what you made him!"

"Miss Dartle," I entreated her. "For Heaven's sake——"

"I *will* speak!" she said, turning on me with her lightning eyes. "Be silent, you! Look at me, I say, proud mother of a proud false son! Moan for your nurture of him, moan for your corruption of him, moan for your loss of him, moan for mine!"

She clenched her hand, and trembled through her spare, worn figure, as if her passion were killing her by inches.

"You, resent his self-will!" she exclaimed. "You, injured by his haughty temper! You, who opposed to both, when your hair was grey, the qualities which made both when you gave him birth! You, who from his cradle reared him to be what he was, and stunted what he should have been! Are you rewarded, *now*, for your years of trouble?"

"O, Miss Dartle, shame! O cruel!"

"I tell you," she returned, "I *will* speak to her. No power on earth should stop me, while I was standing here! Have I been silent all these years, and shall I not speak now? I loved him better than you ever loved him!" turn-

ing on her fiercely. "I could have loved him, and asked no return. If I had been his wife, I could have been the slave of his caprices for a word of love a-year. I should have been. Who knows it better than I? You were exacting, proud, punctilious, selfish. My love would have been devoted—would have trod your paltry whimpering underfoot!"

With flashing eyes, she stamped upon the ground as if she actually did it.

"Look here!" she said, striking the scar again, with a relentless hand. "When he grew into the better understanding of what he had done, he saw it, and repented of it! I could sing to him, and talk to him, and show the ardour that I felt in all he did, and attain with labour to such knowledge as most interested him; and I attracted him. When he was freshest and truest, he loved *me*. Yes, he did! Many a time, when you were put off with a slight word, he has taken Me to his heart!"

She said it with a taunting pride in the midst of her frenzy—for it was little less—yet with an eager remembrance of it, in which the smouldering embers of a gentler feeling kindled for the moment.

"I descended—as I might have known I should, but that he fascinated me with his boyish courtship—into a doll, a trifle for the occupation of an idle hour, to be dropped, and taken up, and trifled with, as the inconstant humour took him. When he grew weary, I grew weary. As his fancy died out, I would no more have tried to strengthen any power I had, than I would have married him on his being forced to take me for his wife. We fell away from one another without a word. Perhaps you saw it, and were not sorry. Since then, I have been a mere disfigured piece of furniture between you both; having no eyes, no ears, no feelings, no remembrances. Moan? Moan for what you made him; not for your love. I tell you that the time was, when I loved him better than you ever did!"

She stood with her bright angry eyes confronting the wide stare, and the set face; and softened no more, when the moaning was repeated, than if the face had been a picture.

"Miss Dartle," said I, "if you can be so obdurate as not to feel for this afflicted mother——"

"Who feels for me?" she sharply retorted. "She has

sown this. Let her moan for the harvest that she reaps to-day!"

"And if his faults——" I began.

"Faults!" she cried, bursting into passionate tears. "Who dares malign him? He had a soul worth millions of the friends to whom he stooped!"

"No one can have loved him better, no one can hold him in dearer remembrance, than I," I replied. "I meant to say, if you have no compassion for his mother; or if his faults—you have been bitter on them——"

"It's false," she cried, tearing her black hair; "I loved him!"

"—cannot," I went on, "be banished from your remembrance, in such an hour; look at that figure, even as one you have never seen before, and render it some help!"

All this time, the figure was unchanged, and looked unchangeable. Motionless, rigid, staring; moaning in the same dumb way from time to time, with the same helpless motion of the head; but giving no other sign of life. Miss Dartle suddenly kneeled down before it, and began to loosen the dress.

"A curse upon you!" she said, looking round at me, with a mingled expression of rage and grief. "It was in an evil hour that you ever came here! A curse upon you! Go!"

After passing out of the room, I hurried back to ring the bell, the sooner to alarm the servants. She had then taken the impassive figure in her arms, and, still upon her knees, was weeping over it, kissing it, calling to it, rocking it to and fro upon her bosom like a child, and trying every tender means to rouse the dormant senses. No longer afraid of leaving her, I noiselessly turned back again; and alarmed the house as I went out.

Later in the day, I returned, and we laid him in his mother's room. She was just the same, they told me; Miss Dartle never left her; doctors were in attendance, many things had been tried; but she lay like a statue, except for the low sound now and then.

I went through the dreary house, and darkened the windows. The windows of the chamber where he lay, I darkened last. I lifted up the leaden hand, and held it to my heart; and all the world seemed death and silence, broken only by his mother's moaning.

CHAPTER LVII.

THE EMIGRANTS.

One thing more, I had to do, before yielding myself to the shock of these emotions. It was, to conceal what had occurred, from those who were going away; and to dismiss them on their voyage in happy ignorance. In this, no time was to be lost.

I took Mr. Micawber aside that same night, and confided to him the task of standing between Mr. Peggotty and intelligence of the late catastrophe. He zealously undertook to do so, and to intercept any newspaper through which it might, without such precautions, reach him.

"If it penetrates to him, Sir," said Mr. Micawber, striking himself on the breast, "it shall first pass through this body!"

Mr. Micawber, I must observe, in his adaptation of himself to a new state of society, had acquired a bold buccaneering air, not absolutely lawless, but defensive and prompt. One might have supposed him a child of the wilderness, long accustomed to live out of the confines of civilisation, and about to return to his native wilds.

He had provided himself, among other things, with a complete suit of oil-skin, and a straw hat with a very low crown, pitched or caulked on the outside. In this rough clothing, with a common mariner's telescope under his arm, and a shrewd trick of casting up his eye at the sky as looking out for dirty weather, he was far more nautical, after his manner, than Mr. Peggotty. His whole family, if I may so express it, were cleared for action. I found Mrs. Micawber in the closest and most uncompromising of bonnets, made fast under the chin; and in a shawl which tied her up (as I had been tied up, when my aunt first received me) like a bundle, and was secured behind at the waist, in a strong knot. Miss Micawber I found made snug for stormy weather, in the same manner; with nothing superfluous about her. Master Micawber was hardly visible in a Guernsey shirt, and the shaggiest suit of slops I ever saw; and the children were done up, like preserved meats, in

impervious cases. Both Mr. Micawber and his eldest son wore their sleeves loosely turned back at the wrists, as being ready to lend a hand in any direction, and to "tumble up," or sing out, "Yeo—Heave—Yeo!" on the shortest notice.

Thus Traddles and I found them at nightfall, assembled on the wooden steps, at that time known as Hungerford Stairs, watching the departure of a boat with some of their property on board. I had told Traddles of the terrible event, and it had greatly shocked him; but there could be no doubt of the kindness of keeping it a secret, and he had come to help me in this last service. It was here that I took Mr. Micawber aside, and received his promise.

The Micawber family were lodged in a little, dirty, tumble-down public-house, which in those days was close to the stairs, and whose protruding wooden rooms overhung the river. The family, as emigrants, being objects of some interest in and about Hungerford, attracted so many beholders, that we were glad to take refuge in their room. It was one of the wooden chambers up-stairs, with the tide flowing underneath. My aunt and Agnes were there, busily making some little extra comforts, in the way of dress, for the children. Peggotty was quietly assisting, with the old insensible work-box, yard measure, and bit of wax-candle before her, that had now outlived so much.

It was not easy to answer her inquiries; still less to whisper Mr. Peggotty, when Mr. Micawber brought him in, that I had given the letter, and all was well. But I did both, and made them happy. If I showed any trace of what I felt, my own sorrows were sufficient to account for it.

"And when does the ship sail, Mr. Micawber?" asked my aunt.

Mr. Micawber considered it necessary to prepare either my aunt or his wife, by degrees, and said, sooner than he had expected yesterday.

"The boat brought you word, I suppose?" said my aunt.

"It did, ma'am," he returned.

"Well?" said my aunt. "And she sails——"

"Madam," he replied, "I am informed that we must positively be on board before seven to-morrow morning."

"Heyday!" said my aunt, "that's soon. Is it a sea-going fact, Mr. Peggotty?"

"'Tis so, ma'am. She'll drop down the river with that theer tide. If Mas'r Davy and my sister comes aboard at Gravesen', arternoon o' next day, they'll see the last on us."

"And that we shall do," said I, "be sure!"

"Until then, and until we are at sea," observed Mr. Micawber, with a glance of intelligence at me, "Mr. Peggotty and myself will constantly keep a double look-out together, on our goods and chattels. Emma, my love," said Mr. Micawber, clearing his throat in his magnificent way, "my friend Mr. Thomas Traddles is so obliging as to solicit, in my ear, that he should have the privilege of ordering the ingredients necessary to the composition of a moderate portion of that Beverage which is peculiarly associated, in our minds, with the Roast Beef of Old England. I allude to—in short, Punch. Under ordinary circumstances, I should scruple to entreat the indulgence of Miss Trotwood and Miss Wickfield, but——"

"I can only say for myself," said my aunt, "that I will drink all happiness and success to you, Mr. Micawber, with the utmost pleasure."

"And I too!" said Agnes, with a smile.

Mr. Micawber immediately descended to the bar, where he appeared to be quite at home; and in due time returned with a steaming jug. I could not but observe that he had been peeling the lemons with his own clasp-knife, which, as became the knife of a practical settler, was about a foot long; and which he wiped, not wholly without ostentation, on the sleeve of his coat. Mrs. Micawber and the two elder members of the family I now found to be provided with similar formidable instruments, while every child had its own wooden spoon attached to its body by a strong line. In a similar anticipation of life afloat, and in the Bush, Mr. Micawber, instead of helping Mrs. Micawber and his eldest son and daughter to punch, in wine-glasses, which he might easily have done, for there was a shelf-full in the room, served it out to them in a series of villainous little tin pots; and I never saw him enjoy anything so much as drinking out of his own particular pint pot, and putting it in his pocket at the close of the evening.

"The luxuries of the old country," said Mr. Micawber, with an intense satisfaction in their renouncement, "we abandon. The denizens of the forest cannot, of course,

expect to participate in the refinements of the land of the Free."

Here, a boy came in to say that Mr. Micawber was wanted down-stairs.

"I have a presentiment," said Mrs. Micawber, setting down her tin pot, "that it is a member of my family."

"If so, my dear," observed Mr. Micawber, with his usual suddenness of warmth on that subject, "as the member of your family—whoever he, she, or it, may be—has kept *us* waiting for a considerable period, perhaps the Member may now wait *my* convenience."

"Micawber," said his wife, in a low tone, "at such a time as this——"

"'It is not meet,'" said Mr. Micawber, rising, "'that every nice offence should bear its comment!' Emma, I stand reproved."

"The loss, Micawber," observed his wife, "has been my family's, not yours. If my family are at length sensible of the deprivation to which their own conduct has, in the past, exposed them, and now desire to extend the hand of fellowship, let it not be repulsed."

"My dear," he returned, "so be it!"

"If not for their sakes; for mine, Micawber," said his wife.

"Emma," he returned, "that view of the question is, at such a moment, irresistible. I cannot, even now, distinctly pledge myself to fall upon your family's neck; but the member of your family, who is now in attendance, shall have no genial warmth frozen by me."

Mr. Micawber withdrew, and was absent some little time; in the course of which Mrs. Micawber was not wholly free from an apprehension that words might have arisen between him and the Member. At length the same boy re-appeared, and presented me with a note written in pencil, and headed, in a legal manner, "Heep *v.* Micawber." From this document, I learned that Mr. Micawber being again arrested, was in a final paroxysm of despair; and that he begged me to send him his knife and pint pot, by bearer, as they might prove serviceable during the brief remainder of his existence, in jail. He also requested, as a last act of friendship, that I would see his family to the Parish Workhouse, and forget that such a Being ever lived.

Of course I answered this note by going down with the

boy to pay the money, where I found Mr. Micawber sitting in a corner, looking darkly at the sheriff's officer who had effected the capture. On his release, he embraced me with the utmost fervour; and made an entry of the transaction in his pocket-book—being very particular, I recollect, about a halfpenny I inadvertently omitted from my statement of the total.

This momentous pocket-book was a timely reminder to him of another transaction. On our return to the room upstairs (where he accounted for his absence by saying that it had been occasioned by circumstances over which he had no control), he took out of it a large sheet of paper, folded small, and quite covered with long sums, carefully worked. From the glimpse I had of them, I should say that I never saw such sums out of a school ciphering-book. These, it seemed, were calculations of compound interest on what he called "the principal amount of forty-one, ten, eleven, and a half," for various periods. After a careful consideration of these, and an elaborate estimate of his resources, he had come to the conclusion to select that sum which represented the amount with compound interest to two years, fifteen calendar months, and fourteen days, from that date. For this he had drawn a note-of-hand with great neatness, which he handed over to Traddles on the spot, a discharge of his debt in full (as between man and man), with many acknowledgments.

"I have still a presentiment," said Mrs. Micawber, pensively shaking her head, "that my family will appear on board, before we finally depart."

Mr. Micawber evidently had his presentiment on the subject too, but he put it in his tin pot and swallowed it.

"If you have any opportunity of sending letters home, on your passage, Mrs. Micawber," said my aunt, "you must let us hear from you, you know."

"My dear Miss Trotwood," she replied, "I shall only be too happy to think that anyone expects to hear from us. I shall not fail to correspond. Mr. Copperfield, I trust, as an old and familiar friend, will not object to receive occasional intelligence, himself, from one who knew him when the twins were yet unconscious?"

I said that I should hope to hear, whenever she had an opportunity of writing.

"Please Heaven, there will be many such opportunities,"

said Mr. Micawber. "The ocean, in these times, is a perfect fleet of ships; and we can hardly fail to encounter many, in running over. It is merely crossing," said Mr. Micawber, trifling with his eye-glass, "merely crossing. The distance is quite imaginary."

I think, now, how odd it was, but how wonderfully like Mr. Micawber, that, when he went from London to Canterbury, he should have talked as if he were going to the farthest limits of the earth; and, when he went from England to Australia, as if he were going for a little trip across the Channel.

"On the voyage, I shall endeavour," said Mr. Micawber, "occasionally to spin them a yarn; and the melody of my son Wilkins will, I trust, be acceptable at the galley-fire. When Mrs. Micawber has her sea-legs on—an expression in which I hope there is no conventional impropriety—she will give them, I dare say, Little Tafflin. Porpoises and dolphins, I believe, will be frequently observed athwart our Bows, and, either on the Starboard or the Larboard Quarter, objects of interest will be continually descried. In short," said Mr. Micawber, with the old genteel air, "the probability is, all will be found so exciting, alow and aloft, that when the look-out, stationed in the main-top, cries Land-oh! we shall be very considerably astonished!"

With that he flourished off the contents of his little tin pot, as if he had made the voyage, and had passed a first-class examination before the highest naval authorities.

"What *I* chiefly hope, my dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "is, that in some branches of our family we may live again in the old country. Do not frown, Micawber! I do not now refer to my own family, but to our children's children. However vigorous the sapling," said Mrs. Micawber, shaking her head, "I cannot forget the parent-tree; and when our race attains to eminence and fortune, I own I should wish that fortune to flow into the coffers of Britannia."

"My dear," said Mr. Micawber, "Britannia must take her chance. I am bound to say that she has never done much for me, and that I have no particular wish upon the subject."

"Micawber," returned Mrs. Micawber, "there you are wrong. You are going out, Micawber, to this distant clime,

to strengthen, not to weaken, the connexion between yourself and Albion."

"The connexion in question, my love," rejoined Mr. Micawber, "has not laid me, I repeat, under that load of personal obligation, that I am at all sensitive as to the formation of another connexion."

"Micawber," returned Mrs. Micawber. "There, I again say, you are wrong. You do not know your power, Micawber. It is that which will strengthen, even in this step you are about to take, the connexion between yourself and Albion."

Mr. Micawber sat in his elbow-chair, with his eyebrows raised; half receiving and half repudiating Mrs. Micawber's views as they were stated, but very sensible of their foresight.

"My dear Mr. Copperfield," said Mrs. Micawber, "I wish Mr. Micawber to feel his position. It appears to me highly important that Mr. Micawber should, from the hour of his embarkation, feel his position. Your old knowledge of me, my dear Mr. Copperfield, will have told you that I have not the sanguine disposition of Mr. Micawber. My disposition is, if I may say so, eminently practical. I know that this is a long voyage. I know that it will involve many privations and inconveniences. I cannot shut my eyes to those facts. But, I also know what Mr. Micawber is. I know the latent power of Mr. Micawber. And therefore I consider it vitally important that Mr. Micawber should feel his position."

"My love," he observed, "perhaps you will allow me to remark that it is barely possible that I *do* feel my position at the present moment."

"I think not, Micawber," she rejoined. "Not fully. My dear Mr. Copperfield, Mr. Micawber's is not a common case. Mr. Micawber is going to a distant country, expressly in order that he may be fully understood and appreciated for the first time. I wish Mr. Micawber to take his stand upon that vessel's prow, and firmly say, 'This country I am come to conquer! Have you honours? Have you riches? Have you posts of profitable pecuniary emolument? Let them be brought forward. They are mine!'"

Mr. Micawber, glancing at us all, seemed to think there was a good deal in this idea.

"I wish Mr. Micawber, if I make myself understood,"

said Mrs. Micawber, in her argumentative tone, "to be the Cæsar of his own fortunes. That, my dear Mr. Copperfield, appears to me to be his true position. From the first moment of this voyage, I wish Mr. Micawber to stand upon that vessel's prow and say, 'Enough of delay: enough of disappointment: enough of limited means. That was in the old country. This is the new. Produce your reparation. Bring it forward!'"

Mr. Micawber folded his arms, in a resolute manner, as if he were then stationed on the figure-head.

"And doing that," said Mrs. Micawber, "—feeling his position—am I not right in saying that Mr. Micawber will strengthen, and not weaken, his connexion with Britain? An important public character arising in that hemisphere, shall I be told that its influence will not be felt at home? Can I be so weak as to imagine that Mr. Micawber, wielding the rod of talent and of power in Australia, will be nothing in England? I am but a woman; but I should be unworthy of myself, and of my papa, if I were guilty of such absurd weakness."

Mrs. Micawber's conviction that her arguments were unanswerable, gave a moral elevation to her tone which I think I had never heard in it before.

"And therefore it is," said Mrs. Micawber, "that I the more wish, that, at a future period, we may live again on the parent soil. Mr. Micawber may be—I cannot disguise from myself that the probability is, Mr. Micawber will be —a page of History; and he ought then to be represented in the country which gave him birth, and did *not* give him employment!"

"My love," observed Mr. Micawber, "it is impossible for me not to be touched by your affection. I am always willing to defer to your good sense. What will be—will be. Heaven forbid that I should grudge my native country any portion of the wealth that may be accumulated by our descendants!"

"That's well," said my aunt, nodding towards Mr. Peggotty, "and I drink my love to you all, and every blessing and success attend you!"

Mr Peggotty put down the two children he had been nursing, one on each knee, to join Mr. and Mrs. Micawber in drinking to all of us in return, and when he and the Micawbers cordially shook hands as comrades, and his brown

face brightened with a smile, I felt that he would make his way, establish a good name, and be beloved, go where he would.

Even the children were instructed, each to dip a wooden spoon into Mr. Micawber's pot, and pledge us in its contents. When this was done, my aunt and Agnes rose, and parted from the emigrants. It was a sorrowful farewell. They were all crying; the children hung about Agnes to the last; and we left poor Mrs. Micawber in a very distressed condition, sobbing and weeping by a dim candle, that must have made the room look, from the river, like a miserable lighthouse.

I went down again next morning to see that they were away. They had departed, in a boat, as early as five o'clock. It was a wonderful instance to me of the gap such partings make, that although my association of them with the tumble-down public-house and the wooden stairs dated only from last night, both seemed dreary and deserted, now that they were gone.

In the afternoon of the next day, my old nurse and I went down to Gravesend. We found the ship in the river, surrounded by a crowd of boats; a favourable wind blowing; the signal for sailing at her mast-head. I hired a boat directly, and we put off to her; and getting through the little vortex of confusion of which she was the centre, went on board.

Mr. Peggotty was waiting for us on deck. He told me that Mr. Micawber had just now been arrested again (and for the last time) at the suit of Heep, and that, in compliance with a request I had made to him, he had paid the money: which I repaid him. He then took us down between decks; and there, any lingering fears I had of his having heard any rumours of what had happened, were dispelled by Mr. Micawber's coming out of the gloom, taking his arm with an air of friendship and protection, and telling me that they had scarcely been asunder for a moment, since the night before last.

It was such a strange scene to me, and so confined and dark, that, at first, I could make out hardly anything; but, by degrees, it cleared, as my eyes became more accustomed to the gloom, and I seemed to stand in a picture by Ostade. Among the great beams, bulks, and ringbolts of the ship, and the emigrant-berths, and chests, and bundles, and bar-

rels, and heaps of miscellaneous baggage—lighted up, here and there, by dangling lanterns; and elsewhere by the yellow daylight straying down a windsail or a hatchway—were crowded groups of people, making new friendships, taking leave of one another, talking, laughing, crying, eating and drinking; some, already settled down into the possession of their few feet of space, with their little households arranged, and tiny children established on stools, or in dwarf elbow-chairs; others, despairing of a resting-place, and wandering disconsolately. From babies who had but a week or two of life behind them, to crooked old men and women who seemed to have but a week or two of life before them; and from ploughmen bodily carrying out soil of England on their boots, to smiths taking away samples of its soot and smoke upon their skins; every age and occupation appeared to be crammed into the narrow compass of the 'tween decks.

As my eye glanced round this place, I thought I saw sitting, by an open port, with one of the Micawber children near her, a figure like Emily's; it first attracted my attention, by another figure parting from it with a kiss; and as it glided calmly away through the disorder, reminding me of—Agnes! But in the rapid motion and confusion, and in the unsettlement of my own thoughts, I lost it again; and only knew that the time was come when all visitors were being warned to leave the ship; that my nurse was crying on a chest beside me; and that Mrs. Gummidge, assisted by some younger stooping woman in black, was busily arranging Mr. Peggotty's goods.

"Is there any last wured, Mas'r Davy?" said he. "Is there any one forgotten thing afore we parts?"

"One thing!" said I. "Martha!"

He touched the younger woman I have mentioned on the shoulder, and Martha stood before me.

"Heaven bless you, you good man!" cried I. "You take her with you!"

She answered for him, with a burst of tears. I could speak no more, at that time, but I wrung his hand; and if ever I have loved and honoured any man, I loved and honoured that man in my soul.

The ship was clearing fast of strangers. The greatest trial that I had, remained. I told him what the noble

spirit that was gone, had given me in charge to say at parting. It moved him deeply. But when he charged me, in return, with many messages of affection and regret for those deaf ears, he moved me more.

The time was come. I embraced him, took my weeping nurse upon my arm, and hurried away. On deck, I took leave of poor Mrs. Micawber. She was looking distractedly about for her family, even then; and her last words to me were, that she never would desert Mr. Micawber.

We went over the side into our boat, and lay at a little distance to see the ship wafted on her course. It was then calm, radiant sunset. She lay between us and the red light; and every taper line and spar was visible against the glow. A sight at once so beautiful, so mournful, and so hopeful, as the glorious ship, lying still, on the flushed water, with all the life on board her crowded at the bulwarks, and there clustering, for a moment, bare-headed and silent, I never saw.

Silent, only for a moment. As the sails rose to the wind, and the ship began to move, there broke from all the boats three resounding cheers, which those on board took up, and echoed back, and which were echoed and re-echoed. My heart burst out when I heard the sound, and beheld the waving of the hats and handkerchiefs—and then I saw her!

Then I saw her, at her uncle's side, and trembling on his shoulder. He pointed to us with an eager hand; and she saw us, and waved her last good-bye to me. Ay, Emily, beautiful and drooping, cling to him with the utmost trust of thy bruised heart; for he has clung to thee, with all the might of his great love!

Surrounded by the rosy light, and standing high upon the deck, apart together, she clinging to him, and he holding her, they solemnly passed away. The night had fallen on the Kentish hills when we were rowed ashore—and fallen darkly upon me.

CHAPTER LVIII.

ABSENCE.

It was a long and gloomy night that gathered on me, haunted by the ghosts of many hopes, of many dear remembrances, many errors, many unavailing sorrows and regrets.

I went away from England; not knowing, even then, how great the shock was, that I had to bear. I left all who were dear to me, and went away; and believed that I had borne it, and it was past. As a man upon a field of battle will receive a mortal hurt, and scarcely know that he is struck, so I, when I was left alone with my undisciplined heart, had no conception of the wound with which it had to strive.

The knowledge came upon me, not quickly, but little by little, and grain by grain. The desolate feeling with which I went abroad, deepened and widened hourly. At first it was a heavy sense of loss and sorrow, wherein I could distinguish little else. By imperceptible degrees, it became a hopeless consciousness of all that I had lost—love, friendship, interest; of all that had been shattered—my first trust, my first affection, the whole airy castle of my life; of all that remained—a ruined blank and waste, lying wide around me, unbroken, to the dark horizon.

If my grief were selfish, I did not know it to be so. I mourned for my child-wife, taken from her blooming world so young. I mourned for him who might have won the love and admiration of thousands, as he had won mine long ago. I mourned for the broken heart that had found rest in the stormy sea; and for the wandering remnants of the simple home, where I had heard the night-wind blowing, when I was a child.

From the accumulated sadness into which I fell, I had at length no hope of ever issuing again. I roamed from place to place, carrying my burden with me everywhere. I felt its whole weight now; and I drooped beneath it, and I said in my heart that it could never be lightened.

When this despondency was at its worst, I believed that I

should die. Sometimes, I thought that I would like to die at home; and actually turned back on my road, that I might get there soon. At other times, I passed on farther away, from city to city, seeking I know not what, and trying to leave I know not what behind.

It is not in my power to retrace, one by one, all the weary phases of distress of mind through which I passed. There are some dreams that can only be imperfectly and vaguely described; and when I oblige myself to look back on this time of my life, I seem to be recalling such a dream. I see myself passing on among the novelties of foreign towns, palaces, cathedrals, temples, pictures, castles, tombs, fantastic streets—the old abiding places of History and Fancy—as a dreamer might; bearing my painful load through all, and hardly conscious of the objects as they fade before me. Listlessness to everything, but brooding sorrow, was the night that fell on my undisciplined heart. Let me look up from it—as at last I did, thank Heaven!—and from its long, sad, wretched dream, to dawn.

For many months I travelled with this ever-darkening cloud upon my mind. Some blind reasons that I had for not returning home—reasons then struggling within me, vainly, for more distinct expression—kept me on my pilgrimage. Sometimes, I had proceeded restlessly from place to place, stopping nowhere; sometimes, I had lingered long in one spot. I had had no purpose, no sustaining soul within me, anywhere.

I was in Switzerland. I had come out of Italy, over one of the great passes of the Alps, and had since wandered with a guide among the by-ways of the mountains. If those awful solitudes had spoken to my heart, I did not know it. I had found sublimity and wonder in the dread heights and precipices, in the roaring torrents, and the wastes of ice and snow; but as yet, they had taught me nothing else.

I came, one evening before sunset, down into a valley, where I was to rest. In the course of my descent to it, by the winding track along the mountain-side, from which I saw it shining far below, I think some long-unwonted sense of beauty and tranquillity, some softening influence awakened by its peace, moved faintly in my breast. I remember pausing once, with a kind of sorrow that was not all oppressive, not quite despairing. I remember almost hoping that some better change was possible within me.

I came into the valley, as the evening sun was shining on the remote heights of snow, that closed it in, like eternal clouds. The bases of the mountains forming the gorge in which the little village lay, were richly green; and high above this gentler vegetation, grew forests of dark fir, cleaving the wintry snow-drift, wedge-like, and stemming the avalanche. Above these, were range upon range of craggy steeps, grey rock, bright ice, and smooth verdure-specks of pasture, all gradually blending with the crowning snow. Dotted here and there on the mountain's-side, each tiny dot a home, were lonely wooden cottages, so dwarfed by the towering heights that they appeared too small for toys. So did even the clustered village in the valley, with its wooden bridge across the stream, where the stream tumbled over broken rocks, and roared away among the trees. In the quiet air, there was a sound of distant singing—shepherd voices; but, as one bright evening cloud floated midway along the mountain's-side, I could almost have believed it came from there, and was not earthly music. All at once, in this serenity, great Nature spoke to me; and soothed me to lay down my weary head upon the grass, and weep as I had not wept yet, since Dora died!

I had found a packet of letters awaiting me but a few minutes before, and had strolled out of the village to read them while my supper was making ready. Other packets had missed me, and I had received none for a long time. Beyond a line or two, to say that I was well, and had arrived at such a place, I had not had fortitude or constancy to write a letter since I left home.

The packet was in my hand. I opened it, and read the writing of Agnes.

She was happy and useful, was prospering as she had hoped. That was all she told me of herself. The rest referred to me.

She gave me no advice; she urged no duty on me; she only told me, in her own fervent manner, what her trust in me was. She knew (she said) how such a nature as mine would turn affliction to good. She knew how trial and emotion would exalt and strengthen it. She was sure that in my every purpose I should gain a firmer and a higher tendency, through the grief I had undergone. She, who so gloried in my fame, and so looked forward to its augmentation, well knew that I would labour on. She knew

that in me, sorrow could not be weakness, but must be strength. As the endurance of my childish days had done its part to make me what I was, so greater calamities would nerve me on, to be yet better than I was; and so, as they had taught me, would I teach others. She commended me to God, who had taken my innocent darling to His rest; and in her sisterly affection cherished me always, and was always at my side go where I would; proud of what I had done, but infinitely prouder yet of what I was reserved to do.

I put the letter in my breast, and thought what had I been an hour ago! When I heard the voices die away, and saw the quiet evening cloud grow dim, and all the colours in the valley fade, and the golden snow upon the mountain-tops become a remote part of the pale night sky, yet felt that the night was passing from my mind, and all its shadows clearing, there was no name for the love I bore her, dearer to me, henceforward, than ever until then.

I read her letter, many times. I wrote to her before I slept. I told her that I had been in sore need of her help; that without her I was not, and I never had been, what she thought me; but, that she inspired me to be that, and I would try.

I did try. In three months more, a year would have passed since the beginning of my sorrow. I determined to make no resolutions until the expiration of those three months, but to try. I lived in that valley, and its neighbourhood, all the time.

The three months gone, I resolved to remain away from home for some time longer; to settle myself for the present in Switzerland, which was growing dear to me in the remembrance of that evening; to resume my pen; to work.

I resorted humbly whither Agnes had commended me; I sought out Nature, never sought in vain; and I admitted to my breast the human interest I had lately shrunk from. It was not long, before I had almost as many friends in the valley as in Yarmouth; and when I left it, before the winter set in, for Geneva, and came back in the spring, their cordial greetings had a homely sound to me, although they were not conveyed in English words.

I worked early and late, patiently and hard. I wrote a Story, with a purpose growing, not remotely, out of my experience, and sent it to Traddles, and he arranged for its

publication very advantageously for me; and the tidings of my growing reputation began to reach me from travellers whom I encountered by chance. After some rest and change, I fell to work, in my old ardent way, on a new fancy, which took strong possession of me. As I advanced in the execution of this task, I felt it more and more, and roused my utmost energies to do it well. This was my third work of fiction. It was not half written, when, in an interval of rest, I thought of returning home.

For a long time, though studying and working patiently, I had accustomed myself to robust exercise. My health, severely impaired when I left England, was quite restored. I had seen much. I had been in many countries, and I hope I had improved my store of knowledge.

I have now recalled all that I think it needful to recall here, of this term of absence—with one reservation. I have made it, thus far, with no purpose of suppressing any of my thoughts; for, as I have elsewhere said, this narrative is my written memory. I have desired to keep the most secret current of my mind apart, and to the last. I enter on it now.

I cannot so completely penetrate the mystery of my own heart, as to know when I began to think that I might have set its earliest and brightest hopes on Agnes. I cannot say at what stage of my grief it first became associated with the reflection, that, in my wayward boyhood, I had thrown away the treasure of her love. I believe I may have heard some whisper of that distant thought, in the old unhappy loss or want of something never to be realised, of which I had been sensible. But the thought came into my mind as a new reproach and new regret, when I was left so sad and lonely in the world.

If, at that time, I had been much with her, I should, in the weakness of my desolation, have betrayed this. It was what I remotely dreaded when I was first impelled to stay away from England. I could not have borne to lose the smallest portion of her sisterly affection; yet, in that betrayal, I should have set a constraint between us hitherto unknown

I could not forget that the feeling with which she now regarded me had grown up in my own free choice and course. That if she had ever loved me with another love—and I sometimes thought the time was when she might have done

so—I had cast it away. It was nothing, now, that I had accustomed myself to think of her, when we were both mere children, as one who was far removed from my wild fancies. I had bestowed my passionate tenderness upon another object; and what I might have done, I had not done; and what Agnes was to me, I and her own noble heart had made her.

In the beginning of the change that gradually worked in me, when I tried to get a better understanding of myself and be a better man, I did glance, through some indefinite probation, to a period when I might possibly hope to cancel the mistaken past, and to be so blessed as to marry her. But, as time wore on, this shadowy prospect faded, and departed from me. If she had ever loved me, then, I should hold her the more sacred; remembering the confidences I had reposed in her, her knowledge of my errant heart, the sacrifice she must have made to be my friend and sister, and the victory she had won. If she had never loved me, could I believe that she would love me now?

I had always felt my weakness, in comparison with her constancy and fortitude; and now I felt it more and more. Whatever I might have been to her, or she to me, if I had been more worthy of her long ago, I was not now, and she was not. The time was past. I had let it go by, and had deservedly lost her.

That I suffered much in these contentions, that they filled me with unhappiness and remorse, and yet that I had a sustaining sense that it was required of me, in right and honour, to keep away from myself, with shame, the thought of turning to the dear girl in the withering of my hopes, from whom I had frivolously turned when they were bright and fresh—which consideration was at the root of every thought I had concerning her—is all equally true. I made no effort to conceal from myself, now, that I loved her, that I was devoted to her; but I brought the assurance home to myself, that it was now too late, and that our long-subsisting relation must be undisturbed.

I had thought, much and often, of my Dora's shadowing out to me what might have happened, in those years that were destined not to try us; I had considered how the things that never happen, are often as much realities to us, in their effects, as those that are accomplished. The very years she spoke of, were realities now, for my correction; and would

have been, one day, a little later perhaps, though we had parted in our earliest folly. I endeavoured to convert what might have been between myself and Agnes, into a means of making me more self-denying, more resolved, more conscious of myself, and my defects and errors. Thus, through the reflection that it might have been, I arrived at the conviction that it could never be.

These, with their perplexities and inconsistencies, were the shifting quicksands of my mind, from the time of my departure to the time of my return home, three years afterwards. Three years had elapsed since the sailing of the emigrant ship; when, at that same hour of sunset, and in the same place, I stood on the deck of the packet vessel that brought me home, looking on the rosy water where I had seen the image of that ship reflected.

Three years. Long in the aggregate, though short as they went by. And home was very dear to me, and Agnes too—but she was not mine—she was never to be mine. She might have been, but that was past!

CHAPTER LIX.

RETURN.

I LANDED in London on a wintry autumn evening. It was dark and raining, and I saw more fog and mud in a minute than I had seen in a year. I walked from the Custom House to the Monument before I found a coach; and although the very house-fronts, looking on the swollen gutters, were like old friends to me, I could not but admit that they were very dingy friends.

I have often remarked—I suppose everybody has—that one's going away from a familiar place, would seem to be the signal for change in it. As I looked out of the coach-window, and observed that an old house on Fish Street Hill, which had stood untouched by painter, carpenter, or bricklayer, for a century, had been pulled down in my absence; and that a neighbouring street, of time-honoured insalubrity and inconvenience, was being drained and widened; I half expected to find St. Paul's Cathedral looking older.

For some changes in the fortunes of my friends, I was

prepared. My aunt had long been re-established at Dover, and Traddles had begun to get into some little practice at the Bar, in the very first term after my departure. He had chambers in Gray's Inn, now; and had told me, in his last letters, that he was not without hopes of being soon united to the dearest girl in the world.

They expected me home before Christmas; but had no idea of my returning so soon. I had purposely misled them, that I might have the pleasure of taking them by surprise. And yet, I was perverse enough to feel a chill and disappointment in receiving no welcome, and rattling, alone and silent, through the misty streets.

The well-known shops, however, with their cheerful lights, did something for me; and when I alighted at the door of the Gray's Inn Coffee-house, I had recovered my spirits. It recalled, at first, that so-different time when I had put up at the Golden Cross, and reminded me of the changes that had come to pass since then; but that was natural.

"Do you know where Mr. Traddles lives in the Inn?" I asked the waiter, as I warmed myself by the coffee-room fire.

"Holborn Court, Sir. Number two."

"Mr. Traddles has a rising reputation among the lawyers, I believe?" said I.

"Well, Sir," returned the waiter, "probably he has, Sir; but I am not aware of it myself."

This waiter, who was middle-aged and spare, looked for help to a waiter of more authority—a stout, potential old man, with a double-chin, in black breeches and stockings, who came out of a place like a churchwarden's pew, at the end of the coffee-room, where he kept company with a cash-box, a Directory, a Law-list, and other books and papers.

"Mr. Traddles," said the spare waiter. "Number two in the Court."

The potential waiter waved him away, and turned, gravely, to me.

"I was inquiring," said I, "whether Mr. Traddles, at number two in the Court, has not a rising reputation among the lawyers?"

"Never heard his name," said the waiter, in a rich husky voice.

I felt quite apologetic for Traddles.

"He's a young man, sure?" said the portentous waiter,

fixing his eyes severely on me. "How long has he been in the Inn?"

"Not above three years," said I.

The waiter, who I supposed had lived in his churchwarden's pew for forty years, could not pursue such an insignificant subject. He asked me what I would have for dinner?

I felt I was in England again, and really was quite cast down on Traddles's account. There seemed to be no hope for him. I meekly ordered a bit of fish and a steak, and stood before the fire musing on his obscurity.

As I followed the chief waiter with my eyes, I could not help thinking that the garden in which he had gradually blown to be the flower he was, was an arduous place to rise in. It had such a prescriptive, stiff-necked, long-established, solemn, elderly air. I glanced about the room, which had had its sanded floor sanded, no doubt, in exactly the same manner when the chief waiter was a boy—if he ever was a boy, which appeared improbable; and at the shining tables, where I saw myself reflected, in unruffled depths of old mahogany; and at the lamps, without a flaw in their trimming or cleaning; and at the comfortable green curtains, with their pure brass rods, snugly enclosing the boxes; and at the two large coal fires, brightly burning; and at the rows of decanters, burly as if with the consciousness of pipes of expensive old port-wine below; and both England, and the law, appeared to me to be very difficult indeed to be taken by storm. I went up to my bedroom to change my wet clothes; and the vast extent of that old wainscoted apartment (which was over the archway leading to the Inn, I remember), and the sedate immensity of the four-post bedstead, and the indomitable gravity of the chests of drawers, all seemed to unite in sternly frowning on the fortunes of Traddles, or on any such daring youth. I came down again to my dinner; and even the slow comfort of the meal, and the orderly silence of the place—which was bare of guests, the Long Vacation not yet being over—were eloquent on the audacity of Traddles, and his small hopes of a livelihood for twenty years to come.

I had seen nothing like this since I went away, and it quite dashed my hopes for my friend. The chief waiter had had enough of me. He came near me no more; but devoted himself to an old gentleman in long gaiters, to

meet whom a pint of special port seemed to come out of the cellar of its own accord, for he gave no order. The second waiter informed me, in a whisper, that this old gentleman was a retired conveyancer living in the Square, and worth a mint of money, which it was expected he would leave to his laundress's daughter; likewise that it was rumoured that he had a service of plate in a bureau, all tarnished with lying by, though more than one spoon and a fork had never yet been beheld in his chambers by mortal vision. By this time, I quite gave Traddles up for lost; and settled in my own mind that there was no hope for him.

Being very anxious to see the dear old fellow, nevertheless, I despatched my dinner, in a manner not at all calculated to raise me in the opinion of the chief waiter, and hurried out by the back-way. Number two in the Court was soon reached; and an inscription on the door-post informing me that Mr. Traddles occupied a set of chambers on the top story, I ascended the staircase. A crazy old staircase I found it to be, feebly lighted on each landing by a club-headed little oil wick, dying away in a little dungeon of dirty glass.

In the course of my stumbling up-stairs, I fancied I heard a pleasant sound of laughter; and not the laughter of an attorney or barrister, or attorney's clerk or barrister's clerk, but of two or three merry girls. Happening, however, as I stopped to listen, to put my foot in a hole where the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn had left a plank deficient, I fell down with some noise, and when I recovered my footing all was silent.

Groping my way more carefully, for the rest of the journey, my heart beat high when I found the outer door, which had MR. TRADDLES painted on it, open. I knocked. A considerable scuffling within ensued, but nothing else. I therefore knocked again.

A small sharp-looking lad, half-footboy and half-clerk, who was very much out of breath, but who looked at me as if he defied me to prove it legally, presented himself.

"Is Mr. Traddles within?" I said.

"Yes, Sir, but he's engaged."

"I want to see him."

After a moment's survey of me, the sharp-looking lad decided to let me in; and opening the door wider for that

purpose, admitted me, first, into a little closet of a hall; and next into a little sitting-room; where I came into the presence of my old friend (also out of breath), seated at a table, and bending over papers.

"Good God!" cried Traddles, looking up. "It's Copperfield!" and rushed into my arms, where I held him tight.

"All well, my dear Traddles?"

"All well, my dear, dear Copperfield, and nothing but good news!"

We cried with pleasure, both of us.

"My dear fellow," said Traddles, rumpling his hair in his excitement, which was a most unnecessary operation, "my dearest Copperfield, my long-lost and most welcome friend, how glad I am to see you! How brown you are! How glad I am! Upon my life and honour, I never was so rejoiced, my beloved Copperfield, never!"

I was equally at a loss to express my emotions. I was quite unable to speak, at first.

"My dear fellow!" said Traddles. "And grown so famous! My glorious Copperfield! Good gracious me, *when* did you come, *where* have you come from, *what* have you been doing?"

Never pausing for an answer to anything he said, Traddles, who had clapped me into an easy-chair by the fire, all this time impetuously stirred the fire with one hand, and pulled at my neck-kerchief with the other, under some wild delusion that it was a great-coat. Without putting down the poker, he now hugged me again; and I hugged him; and, both laughing, and both wiping our eyes, we both sat down, and shook hands across the hearth.

"To think," said Traddles, "that you should have been so nearly coming home as you must have been, my dear old boy, and not at the ceremony!"

"What ceremony, my dear Traddles?"

"Good gracious me!" cried Traddles, opening his eyes in his old way. "Didn't you get my last letter?"

"Certainly not, if it referred to any ceremony."

"Why, my dear Copperfield," said Traddles, sticking his hair upright with both hands, and then putting his hands on my knees, "I am married!"

"Married!" I cried, joyfully.

"Lord bless me, yes!" said Traddles—"by the Rev.

Horace—to Sophy—down in Devonshire. Why, my dear boy, she's behind the window-curtain! Look here!"

To my amazement, the dearest girl in the world came at that same instant, laughing and blushing, from her place of concealment. And a more cheerful, amiable, honest, happy, bright-looking bride, I believe (as I could not help saying on the spot) the world never saw. I kissed her as an old acquaintance should, and wished them joy with all my might of heart.

"Dear me," said Traddles, "what a delightful re-union this is! You are so extremely brown, my dear Copperfield! God bless my soul, how happy I am!"

"And so am I," said I.

"And I am sure I am!" said the blushing and laughing Sophy.

"We are all as happy as possible!" said Traddles. "Even the girls are happy. Dear me, I declare I forgot them!"

"Forgot?" said I.

"The girls," said Traddles. "Sophy's sisters. They are staying with us. They have come to have a peep at London. The fact is, when—was it you that tumbled up stairs, Copperfield?"

"It was," said I, laughing.

"Well then, when you tumbled up stairs," said Traddles, "I was romping with the girls. In point of fact, we were playing at Puss in the Corner. But as that wouldn't do in Westminster Hall, and as it wouldn't look quite professional if they were seen by a client, they decamped. And they are now—listening, I have no doubt," said Traddles, glancing at the door of another room.

"I am sorry," said I, laughing afresh, "to have occasioned such a dispersion."

"Upon my word," rejoined Traddles, greatly delighted, "if you had seen them running away, and running back again, after you had knocked, to pick up the combs they had dropped out of their hair, and going on in the maddest manner, you wouldn't have said so. My love, will you fetch the girls?"

Sophy tripped away, and we heard her received in the adjoining room with a peal of laughter.

"Really musical, isn't it, my dear Copperfield?" said

Traddles. "It's very agreeable to hear. It quite lights up these old rooms. To an unfortunate bachelor of a fellow who has lived alone all his life, you know, it's positively delicious. It's charming. Poor things, they have had a great loss in Sophy—who, I do assure you, Copperfield, is, and ever was, the dearest girl!—and it gratifies me beyond expression to find them in such good spirits. The society of girls is a very delightful thing, Copperfield. It's not professional, but it's very delightful."

Observing that he slightly faltered, and comprehending that in the goodness of his heart he was fearful of giving me some pain by what he had said, I expressed my concurrence with a heartiness that evidently relieved and pleased him greatly.

"But then," said Traddles, "our domestic arrangements are, to say the truth, quite unprofessional altogether, my dear Copperfield. Even Sophy's being here, is unprofessional. And we have no other place of abode. We have put to sea in a cockboat, but we are quite prepared to rough it. And Sophy's an extraordinary manager! You'll be surprised how those girls are stowed away. I am sure I hardly know how it's done."

"Are many of the young ladies with you?" I inquired.

"The eldest, the Beauty is here," said Traddles, in a low confidential voice, "Caroline. And Sarah's here—the one I mentioned to you as having something the matter with her spine, you know. Immensely better! And the two youngest that Sophy educated are with us. And Louisa's here."

"Indeed!" cried I.

"Yes," said Traddles. "Now the whole set—I mean the chambers—is only three rooms; but Sophy arranges for the girls in the most wonderful way, and they sleep as comfortably as possible. Three in that room," said Traddles, pointing. "Two in that."

I could not help glancing round, in search of the accommodation remaining for Mr. and Mrs. Traddles. Traddles understood me.

"Well!" said Traddles, "we are prepared to rough it, as I said just now; and we *did* improvise a bed last week, upon the floor here. But there's a little room in the roof—a very nice room, when you're up there—which Sophy papered herself, to surprise me; and that's our room at

present. It's a capital little gipsy sort of place. There's quite a view from it."

"And you are happily married at last, my dear Traddles!" said I. "How rejoiced I am!"

"Thank you, my dear Copperfield," said Traddles, as we shook hands once more. "Yes, I am as happy as it's possible to be. There's your old friend, you see," said Traddles, nodding triumphantly at the flower-pot and stand; "and there's the table with the marble top! All the other furniture is plain and serviceable, you perceive. And as to plate, Lord bless you, we haven't so much as a teaspoon."

"All to be earned?" said I, cheerfully.

"Exactly so," replied Traddles, "all to be earned. Of course we have something in the shape of teaspoons, because we stir our tea. But they're Britannia metal."

"The silver will be the brighter when it comes," said I.

"The very thing we say!" cried Traddles. "You see, my dear Copperfield," falling again into the low confidential tone, "after I had delivered my argument in Doe *dem.* Jipes *versus* Wigzell, which did me great service with the profession, I went down into Devonshire, and had some serious conversation in private with the Reverend Horace. I dwelt upon the fact that Sophy—who I do assure you, Copperfield, is the dearest girl!——"

"I am certain she is!" said I.

"She is indeed!" rejoined Traddles. "But I am afraid I am wandering from the subject. Did I mention the Reverend Horace?"

"You said that you dwelt upon the fact——"

"True! Upon the fact that Sophy and I had been engaged for a long period, and that Sophy, with the permission of her parents, was more than content to take me—in short," said Traddles, with his old frank smile, "on our present Britannia-metal footing. Very well. I then proposed to the Reverend Horace—who is a most excellent clergyman, Copperfield, and ought to be a Bishop; or at least ought to have enough to live upon, without pinching himself—that if I could turn the corner, say of two hundred and fifty pounds, in one year; and could see my way pretty clearly to that, or something better, next year; and could plainly furnish a little place like this, besides; then, and in that case, Sophy and I should be united. I took

the liberty of representing that we had been patient for a good many years; and that the circumstance of Sophy's being extraordinarily useful at home, ought not to operate, with her affectionate parents, against her establishment in life—don't you see?"

"Certainly it ought not," said I.

"I am glad you think so, Copperfield," rejoined Traddles, "because, without any imputation on the Reverend Horace, I do think parents, and brothers, and so forth, are sometimes rather selfish in such cases. Well! I also pointed out, that my most earnest desire was, to be useful to the family; and that if I got on in the world, and anything should happen to him—I refer to the Reverend Horace——"

"I understand," said I.

"—Or to Mrs. Crewler—it would be the utmost gratification of my wishes, to be a parent to the girls. He replied in a most admirable manner, exceedingly flattering to my feelings, and undertook to obtain the consent of Mrs. Crewler to this arrangement. They had a dreadful time of it with her. It mounted from her legs into her chest, and then into her head——"

"What mounted?" I asked.

"Her grief," replied Traddles, with a serious look. "Her feelings generally. As I mentioned on a former occasion, she is a very superior woman, but has lost the use of her limbs. Whatever occurs to harass her, usually settles in her legs; but on this occasion it mounted to the chest, and then to the head, and, in short, pervaded the whole system in a most alarming manner. However, they brought her through it by unremitting and affectionate attention; and we were married yesterday six weeks. You have no idea what a Monster I felt, Copperfield, when I saw the whole family crying and fainting away in every direction! Mrs. Crewler couldn't see me before we left—couldn't forgive me, then, for depriving her of her child—but she is a good creature, and has done so since. I had a delightful letter from her, only this morning."

"And in short, my dear friend," said I, "you feel as blest as you deserve to feel!"

"Oh! That's your partiality!" laughed Traddles. "But, indeed, I am in a most enviable state. I work hard, and read Law insatiably. I get up at five every morn-

ing, and don't mind it at all. I hide the girls in the daytime, and make merry with them in the evening. And I assure you I am quite sorry that they are going home on Tuesday, which is the day before the first day of Michaelmas Term. But here," said Traddles, breaking off in his confidence, and speaking aloud, "*are* the girls! Mr. Copperfield, Miss Crewler—Miss Sarah—Miss Louisa—Margaret and Lucy!"

They were a perfect nest of roses; they looked so wholesome and fresh. They were all pretty, and Miss Caroline was very handsome; but there was a loving, cheerful, fireside quality in Sophy's bright looks, which was better than that, and which assured me that my friend had chosen well. We all sat round the fire; while the sharp boy, who I now divined had lost his breath in putting the papers out, cleared them away again, and produced the tea-things. After that, he retired for the night, shutting the outer door upon us with a bang. Mrs. Traddles, with perfect pleasure and composure beaming from her household eyes, having made the tea, then quietly made the toast as she sat in a corner by the fire.

She had seen Agnes, she told me, while she was toasting. "Tom" had taken her down into Kent for a wedding trip, and there she had seen my aunt, too; and both my aunt and Agnes were well, and they had all talked of nothing but me. "Tom" had never had me out of his thoughts, she really believed, all the time I had been away. "Tom" was the authority for everything. "Tom" was evidently the idol of her life; never to be shaken on his pedestal by any commotion; always to be believed in, and done homage to with the whole faith of her heart, come what might.

The deference which both she and Traddles showed towards the Beauty, pleased me very much. I don't know that I thought it very reasonable; but I thought it very delightful, and essentially a part of their character. If Traddles ever for an instant missed the teaspoons that were still to be won, I have no doubt it was when he handed the Beauty her tea. If his sweet-tempered wife could have got up any self-assertion against anyone, I am satisfied it could only have been because she was the Beauty's sister. A few slight indications of a rather petted and capricious manner, which I observed in the Beauty, were manifestly considered, by Traddles and his wife, as her birthright and

natural endowment. If she had been born a Queen Bee, and they labouring Bees, they could not have been more satisfied of that.

But their self-forgetfulness charmed me. Their pride in these girls, and their submission of themselves to all their whims, was the pleasantest little testimony to their own worth I could have desired to see. If Traddles were addressed as "a darling," once in the course of that evening; and besought to bring something here, or carry something there, or take something up, or put something down, or find something, or fetch something; he was so addressed, by one or other of his sisters-in-law, at least twelve times in an hour. Neither could they do anything without Sophy. Somebody's hair fell down, and nobody but Sophy could put it up. Somebody forgot how a particular tune went, and nobody but Sophy could hum that tune right. Somebody wanted to recall the name of a place in Devonshire, and only Sophy knew it. Something was wanted to be written home, and Sophy alone could be trusted to write before breakfast in the morning. Somebody broke down in a piece of knitting, and no one but Sophy was able to put the defaulter in the right direction. They were entire mistresses of the place, and Sophy and Traddles waited on them. How many children Sophy could have taken care of in her time, I can't imagine; but she seemed to be famous for knowing every sort of song that ever was addressed to a child in the English tongue; and she sang dozens to order with the clearest little voice in the world, one after another (every sister issuing directions for a different tune, and the Beauty generally striking in last), so that I was quite fascinated. The best of all was, that, in the midst of their exactions, all the sisters had a great tenderness and respect both for Sophy and Traddles. I am sure, when I took my leave, and Traddles was coming out to walk with me to the coffee-house, I thought I had never seen an obstinate head of hair, or any other head of hair, rolling about in such a shower of kisses.

Altogether, it was a scene I could not help dwelling on with pleasure, for a long time after I got back and had wished Traddles good night. If I had beheld a thousand roses blowing in a top set of chambers, in that withered Gray's Inn, they could not have brightened it half so much. The idea of those Devonshire girls, among the dry

law-stationers and the attorneys' offices; and of the tea and toast, and children's songs, in that grim atmosphere of pounce and parchment, red tape, dusty wafers, ink-jars, brief and draft paper, law reports, writs, declarations, and bills of costs; seemed almost as pleasantly fanciful as if I had dreamed that the Sultan's famous family had been admitted on the roll of attorneys, and had brought the talking bird, the singing tree, and the golden water into Gray's Inn Hall. Somehow, I found that I had taken leave of Traddles for the night, and come back to the coffee-house, with a great change in my despondency about him. I began to think he would get on, in spite of all the many orders of chief waiters in England.

Drawing a chair before one of the coffee-room fires to think about him at my leisure, I gradually fell from the consideration of his happiness to tracing prospects in the live coals, and to thinking, as they broke and changed, of the principal vicissitudes and separations that had marked my life. I had not seen a coal fire, since I had left England three years ago: though many a wood fire had I watched, as it crumbled into hoary ashes, and mingled with the feathery heap upon the hearth, which not inaptly figured to me, in my despondency, my own dead hopes.

I could think of the past now, gravely, but not bitterly; and could contemplate the future in a brave spirit. Home, in its best sense, was for me no more. She in whom I might have inspired a dearer love, I had taught to be my sister. She would marry, and would have new claimants on her tenderness: and in doing it, would never know the love for her that had grown up in my heart. It was right that I should pay the forfeit of my headlong passion. What I reaped, I had sown.

I was thinking, And had I truly disciplined my heart to this, and could I resolutely bear it, and calmly hold the place in her home which she had calmly held in mine,— when I found my eyes resting on a countenance that might have arisen out of the fire, in its association with my early remembrances.

Little Mr. Chillip the Doctor, to whose good offices I was indebted in the very first chapter of this history, sat reading a newspaper in the shadow of an opposite corner. He was tolerably stricken in years by this time; but, being a mild, meek, calm little man, had worn so easily, that I

thought he looked at that moment just as he might have looked when he sat in our parlour, waiting for me to be born.

Mr. Chillip had left Blunderstone six or seven years ago, and I had never seen him since. He sat placidly perusing the newspaper, with his little head on one side, and a glass of warm sherry negus at his elbow. He was so extremely conciliatory in his manner that he seemed to apologise to the very newspaper for taking the liberty of reading it.

I walked up to where he was sitting, and said, "How do you do, Mr. Chillip?"

He was greatly fluttered by this unexpected address from a stranger, and replied, in his slow way, "I thank you, Sir, you are very good. Thank you, Sir. I hope *you* are well."

"You don't remember me?" said I.

"Well, Sir," returned Mr. Chillip, smiling very meekly, and shaking his head as he surveyed me, "I have a kind of an impression that something in your countenance is familiar to me, Sir; but I couldn't lay my hand upon your name, really."

"And yet you knew it, long before I knew it myself," I returned.

"Did I indeed, Sir?" said Mr. Chillip. "Is it possible that I had the honour, Sir, of officiating when——?"

"Yes," said I.

"Dear me!" cried Mr. Chillip. "But no doubt you are a good deal changed since then, Sir?"

"Probably," said I.

"Well, Sir," observed Mr. Chillip, "I hope you'll excuse me, if I am compelled to ask the favour of your name?"

On my telling him my name, he was really moved. He quite shook hands with me—which was a violent proceeding for him, his usual course being to slide a tepid little fish-slice, an inch or two in advance of his hip, and evince the greatest discomposure when anybody grappled with it. Even now, he put his hand in his coat-pocket as soon as he could disengage it, and seemed relieved when he had got it safe back.

"Dear me, Sir!" said Mr. Chillip, surveying me with his head on one side. "And it's Mr. Copperfield, is it? Well, Sir, I think I should have known you, if I had taken the liberty of looking more closely at you. There's a strong resemblance between you and your poor father, Sir."

"I never had the happiness of seeing my father," I observed.

"Very true, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, in a soothing tone. "And very much to be deplored it was, on all accounts! We are not ignorant, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, slowly shaking his little head again, "down in our part of the country, of your fame. There must be great excitement here, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, tapping himself on the forehead with his forefinger. "You must find it a trying occupation, Sir!"

"What is your part of the country now?" I asked, seating myself near him.

"I am established within a few miles of Bury St. Edmund's, Sir," said Mr. Chillip. "Mrs. Chillip coming into a little property in that neighbourhood, under her father's will, I bought a practice down there, in which you will be glad to hear I am doing well. My daughter is growing quite a tall lass now, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, giving his little head another little shake. "Her mother let down two tucks in her frocks only last week. Such is time, you see, Sir!"

As the little man put his now empty glass to his lips, when he made this reflection, I proposed to him to have it refilled, and I would keep him company with another. "Well, Sir," he returned, in his slow way, "it's more than I am accustomed to; but I can't deny myself the pleasure of your conversation. It seems but yesterday that I had the honour of attending you in the measles. You came through them charmingly, Sir!"

I acknowledged this compliment, and ordered the negus, which was soon produced. "Quite an uncommon dissipation!" said Mr. Chillip, stirring it, "but I can't resist so extraordinary an occasion. You have no family, Sir?"

I shook my head.

"I was aware that you sustained a bereavement, Sir, some time ago," said Mr. Chillip. "I heard it from your father-in-law's sister. Very decided character there, Sir?"

"Why, yes," said I, "decided enough. Where did you see her, Mr. Chillip?"

"Are you not aware, Sir," returned Mr. Chillip, with his placidest smile, "that your father-in-law is again a neighbour of mine?"

"No," said I.

"He is indeed, Sir!" said Mr. Chillip. "Married a young lady of that part, with a very good little property,

poor thing.—And this action of the brain now, Sir? Don't you find it fatigue you?" said Mr. Chillip, looking at me like an admiring Robin.

I waived that question, and returned to the Murdstones. "I was aware of his being married again. Do you attend the family?" I asked.

"Not regularly. I have been called in," he replied. "Strong phrenological development of the organ of firmness, in Mr. Murdstone and his sister, Sir."

I replied with such an expressive look, that Mr. Chillip was emboldened by that, and the negus together, to give his head several short shakes, and thoughtfully exclaim, "Ah, dear me! We remember old times, Mr. Copperfield!"

"And the brother and sister are pursuing their old course, are they?" said I.

"Well, Sir," replied Mr. Chillip, "a medical man, being so much in families, ought to have neither eyes nor ears for anything but his profession. Still, I must say, they are very severe, Sir: both as to this life and the next."

"The next will be regulated without much reference to them, I dare say," I returned: "what are they doing as to this?"

Mr. Chillip shook his head, stirred his negus, and sipped it.

"She was a charming woman, Sir!" he observed in a plaintive manner.

"The present Mrs. Murdstone?"

"A charming woman indeed, Sir," said Mr. Chillip; "as amiable, I am sure, as it was possible to be! Mrs. Chillip's opinion is, that her spirit has been entirely broken since her marriage, and that she is all but melancholy mad. And the ladies," observed Mr. Chillip, timorously, "are great observers, Sir."

"I suppose she was to be subdued and broken to their detestable mould, Heaven help her!" said I. "And she has been."

"Well, Sir, there were violent quarrels at first, I assure you," said Mr. Chillip; "but she is quite a shadow now. Would it be considered forward if I was to say to you, Sir, in confidence, that since the sister came to help, the brother and sister between them have nearly reduced her to a state of imbecility."

I told him I could easily believe it.

"I have no hesitation in saying," said Mr. Chillip, fortifying himself with another sip of negus, "between you and me, Sir, that her mother died of it—or that tyranny, gloom, and worry have made Mrs. Murdstone nearly imbecile. She was a lively young woman, Sir, before marriage, and their gloom and austerity destroyed her. They go about with her, now, more like her keepers than her husband and sister-in-law. That was Mrs. Chillip's remark to me, only last week. And I assure you, Sir, the ladies are great observers. Mrs. Chillip herself is a *great* observer!"

"Does he gloomily profess to be (I am ashamed to use the word in such association) religious still?" I inquired.

"You anticipate, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, his eyelids getting quite red with the unwonted stimulus in which he was indulging. "One of Mrs. Chillip's most impressive remarks. Mrs. Chillip," he proceeded, in the calmest and slowest manner, "quite electrified me, by pointing out that Mr. Murdstone sets up an image of himself, and calls it the Divine Nature. You might have knocked me down on the flat of my back, Sir, with the feather of a pen, I assure you, when Mrs. Chillip said so. The ladies are great observers, Sir?"

"Intuitively," said I, to his extreme delight.

"I am very happy to receive such support in my opinion, Sir," he rejoined. "It is not often that I venture to give a non-medical opinion, I assure you. Mr. Murdstone delivers public addresses sometimes, and it is said,—in short, Sir, it is said by Mrs. Chillip,—that the darker tyrant he has lately been, the more ferocious is his doctrine."

"I believe Mrs. Chillip to be perfectly right," said I.

"Mrs. Chillip does go so far as to say," pursued the meekest of little men, much encouraged, "that what such people miscall their religion, is a vent for their bad humours and arrogance. And do you know I must say, Sir," he continued, mildly laying his head on one side, "that I *don't* find authority for Mr. and Miss Murdstone in the New Testament?"

"I never found it either!" said I.

"In the meantime, Sir," said Mr. Chillip, "they are much disliked; and as they are very free in consigning everybody who dislikes them to perdition, we really have

a good deal of perdition going on in our neighbourhood! However, as Mrs. Chillip says, Sir, they undergo a continual punishment; for they are turned inward, to feed upon their own hearts, and their own hearts are very bad feeding. Now, Sir, about that brain of yours, if you'll excuse my returning to it. Don't you expose it to a good deal of excitement, Sir?"

I found it not difficult, in the excitement of Mr. Chillip's own brain, under his potations of negus, to divert his attention from this topic to his own affairs, on which, for the next half-hour, he was quite loquacious; giving me to understand, among other pieces of information, that he was then at the Gray's Inn Coffee-house to lay his professional evidence before a Commission of Lunacy, touching the state of mind of a patient who had become deranged from excessive drinking.

"And I assure you, Sir," he said, "I am extremely nervous on such occasions. I could not support being what is called Bullied, Sir. It would quite unman me. Do you know it was some time before I recovered the conduct of that alarming lady, on the night of your birth, Mr. Copperfield?"

I told him that I was going down to my aunt, the Dragon of that night, early in the morning; and that she was one of the most tender-hearted and excellent of women, as he would know full well if he knew her better. The mere notion of the possibility of his ever seeing her again, appeared to terrify him. He replied with a small pale smile, "Is she so, indeed, Sir? Really?" and almost immediately called for a candle, and went to bed, as if he were not quite safe anywhere else. He did not actually stagger under the negus; but I should think his placid little pulse must have made two or three more beats in a minute, than it had done since the great night of my aunt's disappointment, when she struck at him with her bonnet.

Thoroughly tired, I went to bed too, at midnight; passed the next day on the Dover coach; burst safe and sound into my aunt's old parlour while she was at tea (she wore spectacles now); and was received by her, and Mr. Dick, and dear old Peggotty, who acted as housekeeper, with open arms and tears of joy. My aunt was mightily amused, when we began to talk composedly, by my account of my meeting with Mr. Chillip, and of his holding her in such

dread remembrance; and both she and Peggotty had a great deal to say about my poor mother's second husband, and "that murdering woman of a sister,"—on whom I think no pain or penalty would have induced my aunt to bestow any Christian or Proper Name, or any other designation.

CHAPTER LX.

AGNES.

My aunt and I, when we were left alone, talked far into the night. How the emigrants never wrote home, otherwise than cheerfully and hopefully; how Mr. Micawber had actually remitted divers small sums of money, on account of those "pecuniary liabilities," in reference to which he had been so business-like as between man and man; how Janet, returning into my aunt's service when she came back to Dover, had finally carried out her renunciation of mankind by entering into wedlock with a thriving tavern-keeper; and how my aunt had finally set *her* seal on the same great principle, by aiding and abetting the bride, and crowning the marriage-ceremony with her presence, were among our topics—already more or less familiar to me through the letters I had had. Mr. Dick, as usual, was not forgotten. My aunt informed me how he incessantly occupied himself in copying everything he could lay his hands on, and kept King Charles the First at a respectful distance by that semblance of employment; how it was one of the main joys and rewards of her life that he was free and happy, instead of pining in monotonous restraint; and how (as a novel general conclusion) nobody but she could ever fully know what he was.

"And when, Trot," said my aunt, patting the back of my hand, as we sat in our old way before the fire, "when are you going over to Canterbury?"

"I shall get a horse, and ride over to-morrow morning, aunt, unless you will go with me?"

"No!" said my aunt, in her short abrupt way. "I mean to stay where I am."

Then, I should ride, I said. I could not have come

through Canterbury to-day without stopping, if I had been coming to anyone but her.

She was pleased, but answered, "Tut, Trot; *my* old bones would have kept till to-morrow!" and softly patted my hand again, as I sat looking thoughtfully at the fire.

Thoughtfully, for I could not be here once more, and so near Agnes, without the revival of those regrets with which I had so long been occupied. Softened regrets they might be, teaching me what I had failed to learn when my younger life was all before me, but not the less regrets. "Oh, Trot," I seemed to hear my aunt say once more; and I understood her better now—"Blind, blind, blind!"

We both kept silence for some minutes. When I raised my eyes, I found that she was steadily observant of me. Perhaps she had followed the current of my mind; for it seemed to me an easy one to track now, wilful as it had been once.

"You will find her father a white-haired old man," said my aunt, "though a better man in all other respects—a reclaimed man. Neither will you find him measuring all human interests, and joys, and sorrows, with his one poor little inch-rule now. Trust me, child, such things must shrink very much, before they can be measured off in *that* way."

"Indeed they must," said I.

"You will find her," pursued my aunt, "as good, as beautiful, as earnest, as disinterested, as she has always been. If I knew higher praise, Trot, I would bestow it on her."

There was no higher praise for her; no higher reproach for me. Oh, how had I strayed so far away!

"If she trains the young girls whom she has about her, to be like herself," said my aunt, earnest even to the filling of her eyes with tears, "Heaven knows, her life will be well employed! Useful and happy, as she said that day! How could she be otherwise than useful and happy!"

"Has Agnes any——" I was thinking aloud, rather than speaking.

"Well? Hey? Any what?" said my aunt, sharply.

"Any lover," said I.

"A score," cried my aunt, with a kind of indignant pride. "She might have married twenty times, my dear, since you have been gone!"

"No doubt," said I. "No doubt. But has she any lover who is worthy of her? Agnes could care for no other."

My aunt sat musing for a little while, with her chin upon her hand. Slowly raising her eyes to mine, she said:

"I suspect she has an attachment, Trot."

"A prosperous one?" said I.

"Trot," returned my aunt gravely, "I can't say. I have no right to tell you even so much. She has never confided it to me, but I suspect it."

She looked so attentively and anxiously at me (I even saw her tremble), that I felt now, more than ever, that she had followed my late thoughts. I summoned all the resolutions I had made, in all those many days and nights, and all those many conflicts of my heart.

"If it should be so," I began, "and I hope it is——"

"I don't know that it is," said my aunt curtly. "You must not be ruled by my suspicions. You must keep them secret. They are very slight, perhaps. I have no right to speak."

"If it should be so," I repeated, "Agnes will tell me at her own good time. A sister to whom I have confided so much, aunt, will not be reluctant to confide in me"

My aunt withdrew her eyes from mine, as slowly as she had turned them upon me; and covered them thoughtfully with her hand. By-and-by she put her other hand on my shoulder; and so we both sat, looking into the past, without saying another word, until we parted for the night.

I rode away, early in the morning, for the scene of my old school days. I cannot say that I was yet quite happy, in the hope that I was gaining a victory over myself; even in the prospect of so soon looking on her face again.

The well-remembered ground was soon traversed, and I came into the quiet streets, where every stone was a boy's book to me. I went on foot to the old house, and went away with a heart too full to enter. I returned; and looking, as I passed, through the low window of the turret-room where first Uriah Heep, and afterwards Mr. Micawber, had been wont to sit, saw that it was a little parlour now, and that there was no office. Otherwise the staid old house was, as to its cleanliness and order, still just as it had been when I first saw it. I requested the new maid who admitted me, to tell Miss Wickfield that a gentleman who waited on her from a friend abroad, was there; and I was shown

up the grave old staircase (cautioned of the steps I knew so well), into the unchanged drawing-room. The books that Agnes and I had read together, were on their shelves; and the desk where I had laboured at my lessons, many a night, stood yet at the same old corner of the table. All the little changes that had crept in when the Heeps were there, were changed again. Everything was as it used to be, in the happy time.

I stood in the window, and looked across the ancient street at the opposite houses, recalling how I had watched them on wet afternoons, when I first came there; and how I had used to speculate about the people who appeared at any of the windows, and had followed them with my eyes up and down stairs, while women went clicking along the pavement in pattens, and the dull rain fell in slanting lines, and poured out of the waterspout yonder, and flowed into the road. The feeling with which I used to watch the tramps, as they came into the town on those wet evenings, at dusk, and limped past, with their bundles drooping over their shoulders at the ends of sticks, came freshly back to me; fraught, as then, with the smell of damp earth, and wet leaves and briar, and the sensation of the very airs that blew upon me in my own toilsome journey.

The opening of the little door in the panelled wall made me start and turn. Her beautiful serene eyes met mine as she came towards me. She stopped and laid her hand upon her bosom, and I caught her in my arms.

"Agnes! my dear girl! I have come too suddenly upon you."

"No, no! I am so rejoiced to see you, Trotwood!"

"Dear Agnes, the happiness it is to me, to see you once again!"

I folded her to my heart, and, for a little while, we were both silent. Presently we sat down, side by side; and her angel-face was turned upon me with the welcome I had dreamed of, waking and sleeping, for whole years.

She was so true, she was so beautiful, she was so good, —I owed her so much gratitude, she was so dear to me, that I could find no utterance for what I felt. I tried to bless her, tried to thank her, tried to tell her (as I had often done in letters) what an influence she had upon me; but all my efforts were in vain. My love and joy were dumb.

With her own sweet tranquillity, she calmed my agita-

tion; led me back to the time of our parting; spoke to me of Emily, whom she had visited, in secret, many times; spoke to me tenderly of Dora's grave. With the unerring instinct of her noble heart, she touched the chords of my memory so softly and harmoniously, that not one jarred within me; I could listen to the sorrowful, distant music, and desire to shrink from nothing it awoke. How could I, when, blended with it all, was her dear self, the better angel of my life?

"And you, Agnes," I said, by-and-by. "Tell me of yourself. You have hardly ever told me of your own life, in all this lapse of time!"

"What should I tell?" she answered, with her radiant smile. "Papa is well. You see us here, quiet in our own home; our anxieties set at rest, our home restored to us; and knowing that, dear Trotwood, you know all."

"All, Agnes?" said I.

She looked at me, with some fluttering wonder in her face.

"Is there nothing else, Sister?" I said.

Her colour, which had just now faded, returned, and faded again. She smiled; with a quiet sadness, I thought; and shook her head.

I had sought to lead her to what my aunt had hinted at; for, sharply painful to me as it must be to receive that confidence, I was to discipline my heart, and do my duty to her. I saw, however, that she was uneasy, and I let it pass.

"You have much to do, dear Agnes?"

"With my school?" said she, looking up again, in all her bright composure.

"Yes. It is laborious, is it not?"

"The labour is so pleasant," she returned, "that it is scarcely grateful in me to call it by that name."

"Nothing good is difficult to you," said I.

Her colour came and went once more; and once more, as she bent her head, I saw the same sad smile.

"You will wait and see papa," said Agnes, cheerfully, "and pass the day with us? Perhaps you will sleep in your own room? We always call it yours."

I could not do that, having promised to ride back to my aunt's, at night; but I would pass the day there, joyfully.

"I must be a prisoner for a little while," said Agnes, "but here are the old books, Trotwood, and the old music."

"Even the old flowers are here," said I, looking round; "or the old kinds."

"I have found a pleasure," returned Agnes, smiling, "while you have been absent, in keeping everything as it used to be when we were children. For we were very happy then, I think."

"Heaven knows we were!" said I.

"And every little thing that has reminded me of my brother," said Agnes, with her cordial eyes turned cheerfully upon me, "has been a welcome companion. Even this," showing me the basket-trifle, full of keys, still hanging at her side, "seems to jingle a kind of old tune!"

She smiled again, and went out at the door by which she had come.

It was for me to guard this sisterly affection with religious care. It was all that I had left myself, and it was a treasure. If I once shook the foundations of the sacred confidence and usage, in virtue of which it was given to me, it was lost, and could never be recovered. I set this steadily before myself. The better I loved her, the more it behoved me never to forget it.

I walked through the streets; and, once more seeing my old adversary the butcher—now a constable, with his staff hanging up in the shop—went down to look at the place where I had fought him; and there meditated on Miss Shepherd and the eldest Miss Larkins, and all the idle loves and likings, and dislikings, of that time. Nothing seemed to have survived that time but Agnes; and she, ever a star above me, was brighter and higher.

When I returned, Mr. Wickfield had come home, from a garden he had, a couple of miles or so out of town, where he now employed himself almost every day. I found him as my aunt had described him. We sat down to dinner, with some half-dozen little girls; and he seemed but the shadow of his handsome picture on the wall.

The tranquillity and peace belonging, of old, to that quiet ground in my memory, pervaded it again. When dinner was done, Mr. Wickfield taking no wine, and I desiring none, we went up stairs; where Agnes and her little charges sang and played, and worked. After tea the children left us; and we three sat together, talking of the bygone days.

"My part in them," said Mr. Wickfield, shaking his

white head, "has much matter for regret—for deep regret, and deep contrition, Trotwood, you well know. But I would not cancel it, if it were in my power."

I could readily believe that, looking at the face beside him.

"I should cancel with it," he pursued, "such patience and devotion, such fidelity, such a child's love, as I must not forget, no! even to forget myself."

"I understand you, Sir," I softly said. "I hold it—I have always held it—in veneration."

"But no one knows, not even you," he returned, "how much she has done, how much she has undergone, how hard she has striven. Dear Agnes!"

She had put her hand entreatingly on his arm, to stop him; and was very, very pale.

"Well, well!" he said with a sigh, dismissing, as I then saw, some trial she had borne, or was yet to bear, in connexion with what my aunt had told me. "Well! I have never told you, Trotwood, of her mother. Has any one?"

"Never, Sir."

"It's not much—though it was much to suffer. She married me in opposition to her father's wish, and he renounced her. She prayed him to forgive her, before my Agnes came into this world. He was a very hard man, and her mother had long been dead. He repulsed her. He broke her heart."

Agnes leaned upon his shoulder, and stole her arm about his neck.

"She had an affectionate and gentle heart," he said; "and it was broken. I knew its tender nature very well. No one could, if I did not. She loved me dearly, but was never happy. She was always labouring, in secret, under this distress; and being delicate and downcast at the time of his last repulse—for it was not the first, by many—pined away and died. She left me Agnes, two weeks old; and the grey hair that you recollect me with, when you first came."

He kissed Agnes on her cheek.

"My love for my dear child was a diseased love, but my mind was all unhealthy then. I say no more of that. I am not speaking of myself, Trotwood, but of her mother, and of her. If I give you any clue to what I am, or to what I have been, you will unravel it, I know. What

Agnes is, I need not say. I have always read something of her poor mother's story, in her character; and so I tell it you to-night, when we three are again together, after such great changes. I have told it all."

His bowed head, and her angel-face and filial duty, derived a more pathetic meaning from it than they had had before. If I had wanted anything by which to mark this night of our reunion, I should have found it in this.

Agnes rose up from her father's side, before long; and going softly to her piano, played some of the old airs to which we had often listened in that place.

"Have you any intention of going away again?" Agnes asked me, as I was standing by.

"What does my sister say to that?"

"I hope not."

"Then I have no such intention, Agnes."

"I think you ought not, Trotwood, since you ask me," she said, mildly. "Your growing reputation and success enlarge your power of doing good; and if *I* could spare my brother," with her eyes upon me, "perhaps the time could not."

"What I am, you have made me, Agnes. You should know best."

"*I* made you, Trotwood?"

"Yes! Agnes, my dear girl!" I said, bending over her. "I tried to tell you, when we met to-day, something that has been in my thoughts since Dora died. You remember, when you came down to me in our little room—pointing upward, Agnes?"

"Oh, Trotwood!" she returned, her eyes filled with tears. "So loving, so confiding, and so young! Can I ever forget?"

"As you were then, my sister, I have often thought since, you have ever been to me. Ever pointing upward, Agnes; ever leading me to something better; ever directing me to higher things!"

She only shook her head; through her tears I saw the same sad quiet smile.

"And I am so grateful to you for it, Agnes, so bound to you, that there is no name for the affection of my heart. I want you to know, yet don't know how to tell you, that all my life long I shall look up to you, and be guided by you, as I have been through the darkness that is past.

Whatever betides, whatever new ties you may form, whatever changes may come between us, I shall always look to you, and love you, as I do now, and have always done. You will always be my solace and resource as you have always been. Until I die, my dearest sister, I shall see you always before me, pointing upward!"

She put her hand in mine, and told me she was proud of me, and of what I said; although I praised her very far beyond her worth. Then she went on softly playing, but without removing her eyes from me.

"Do you know, what I have heard to-night, Agnes," said I, "strangely seems to be a part of the feeling with which I regarded you when I saw you first—with which I sat beside you in my rough school-days?"

"You knew I had no mother," she replied with a smile, "and felt kindly towards me."

"More than that, Agnes, I knew, almost as if I had known this story, that there was something inexplicably gentle and softened, surrounding you; something that might have been sorrowful in someone else (as I can now understand it was), but was not so in you."

She softly played on, looking at me still.

"Will you laugh at my cherishing such fancies, Agnes?"

"No!"

"Or at my saying that I really believe I felt, even then, that you could be faithfully affectionate against all discouragement, and never cease to be so, until you ceased to live?—Will you laugh at such a dream?"

"Oh, no! Oh, no!"

For an instant, a distressful shadow crossed her face; but, even in the start it gave me, it was gone; and she was playing on, and looking at me with her own calm smile.

As I rode back in the lonely night, the wind going by me like a restless memory, I thought of this, and feared she was not happy. *I* was not happy; but, thus far, I had faithfully set the seal upon the Past, and, thinking of her, pointing upward, thought of her as pointing to that sky above me, where, in the mystery to come, I might yet love her with a love unknown on earth, and tell her what the strife had been within me when I loved her here.

CHAPTER LXI.

I AM SHOWN TWO INTERESTING PENITENTS.

For a time—at all events until my book should be completed, which would be the work of several months—I took up my abode in my aunt's house at Dover; and there, sitting in the window from which I had looked out at the moon upon the sea, when that roof first gave me shelter, I quietly pursued my task.

In pursuance of my intention of referring to my own fictions only when their course should incidentally connect itself with the progress of my story, I do not enter on the aspirations, the delights, anxieties, and triumphs, of my art. That I truly devoted myself to it with my strongest earnestness, and bestowed upon it every energy of my soul, I have already said. If the books I have written be of any worth, they will supply the rest. I shall otherwise have written to poor purpose, and the rest will be of interest to no one.

Occasionally, I went to London; to lose myself in the swarm of life there, or to consult with Traddles on some business point. He had managed for me, in my absence, with the soundest judgment; and my worldly affairs were prospering. As my notoriety began to bring upon me an enormous quantity of letters from people of whom I had no knowledge—chiefly about nothing, and extremely difficult to answer—I agreed with Traddles to have my name painted up on his door. There, the devoted postman on that beat delivered bushels of letters for me; and there, at intervals, I laboured through them, like a Home Secretary of State without the salary.

Among this correspondence, there dropped in, every now and then, an obliging proposal from one of the numerous outsiders always lurking about the Commons, to practise under cover of my name (if I would take the necessary steps remaining to make a proctor of myself), and pay me a percentage on the profits. But I declined these offers; being already aware that there were plenty of such covert prac-

titioners in existence, and considering the Commons quite bad enough, without my doing anything to make it worse.

The girls had gone home, when my name burst into bloom on Traddles's door; and the sharp boy looked, all day, as if he had never heard of Sophy, shut up in a back room, glancing down from her work into a sooty little strip of garden with a pump in it. But, there I always found her, the same bright housewife; often humming her Devonshire ballads when no strange foot was coming up the stairs, and blunting the sharp boy in his official closet with melody.

I wondered, at first, why I so often found Sophy writing in a copy-book; and why she always shut it up when I appeared, and hurried it into the table-drawer. But the secret soon came out. One day, Traddles (who had just come home through the drizzling sleet from Court) took a paper out of his desk, and asked me what I thought of that handwriting?

"Oh, *don't*, Tom!" cried Sophy, who was warming his slippers before the fire.

"My dear," returned Tom, in a delighted state, "why not? What do you say to that writing, Copperfield?"

"It's extraordinarily legal and formal," said I. "I don't think I ever saw such a stiff hand."

"Not like a lady's hand, is it?" said Traddles.

"A lady's!" I repeated. "Bricks and mortar are more like a lady's hand!"

Traddles broke into a rapturous laugh, and informed me that it was Sophy's writing; that Sophy had vowed and declared he would need a copying-clerk soon, and she would be that clerk; that she had acquired his hand from a pattern; and that she could throw off—I forget how many folios an hour. Sophy was very much confused by my being told all this, and said that when "Tom" was made a judge he wouldn't be so ready to proclaim it. Which "Tom" denied; averring that he should always be equally proud of it, under all circumstances.

"What a thoroughly good and charming wife she is, my dear Traddles!" said I, when she had gone away, laughing.

"My dear Copperfield," returned Traddles, "she is, without any exception, the dearest girl! The way she manages this place; her punctuality, domestic knowledge, economy, and order; her cheerfulness, Copperfield!"

"Indeed, you have reason to commend her!" I returned. "You are a happy fellow. I believe you make yourselves, and each other, two of the happiest people in the world."

"I am sure we *are* two of the happiest people," returned Traddles. "I admit that, at all events. Bless my soul, when I see her getting up by candle-light on these dark mornings, busying herself in the day's arrangements, going out to market before the clerks come into the Inn, caring for no weather, devising the most capital little dinners out of the plainest materials, making puddings and pies, keeping everything in its right place, always so neat and ornamental herself, sitting up at night with me if it's ever so late, sweet-tempered and encouraging always, and all for me, I positively sometimes can't believe it, Copperfield!"

He was tender of the very slippers she had been warming, as he put them on, and stretched his feet enjoyingly upon the fender.

"I positively sometimes can't believe it," said Traddles. "Then, our pleasures! Dear me, they are inexpensive, but they are quite wonderful! When we are at home here, of an evening, and shut the outer door, and draw those curtains—which she made—where could we be more snug? When it's fine, and we go out for a walk in the evening, the streets abound in enjoyment for us. We look into the glittering windows of the jewellers' shops; and I show Sophy which of the diamond-eyed serpents, coiled up on white satin rising grounds, I would give her if I could afford it; and Sophy shows me which of the gold watches that are capped and jewelled and engine-turned, and possessed of the horizontal lever-escape-movement, and all sorts of things, she would buy for me if *she* could afford it; and we pick out the spoons and forks, fish-slices, butter-knives, and sugar-tongs, we should both prefer if we could both afford it; and really we go away as if we had got them! Then, when we stroll into the squares, and great streets, and see a house to let, sometimes we look up at it, and say, how would *that* do, if I was made a judge? And we parcel it out—such a room for us, such rooms for the girls, and so forth; until we settle to our satisfaction that it would do, or it wouldn't do, as the case may be. Sometimes, we go at half-price to the pit of the theatre—the very smell of which is cheap, in my opinion, at the money—and there we thoroughly enjoy the play: which

Sophy believes every word of, and so do I. In walking home, perhaps we buy a little bit of something at a cook's-shop, or a little lobster at the fishmonger's, and bring it here, and make a splendid supper, chatting about what we have seen. Now, you know, Copperfield, if I was Lord Chancellor, we couldn't do this!"

"You would do something, whatever you were, my dear Traddles," thought I, "that would be pleasant and amiable! And by the way," I said aloud, "I suppose you never draw any skeletons now?"

"Really," replied Traddles, laughing, and reddening, "I can't wholly deny that I do, my dear Copperfield. For, being in one of the back rows of the King's Bench the other day, with a pen in my hand, the fancy came into my head to try how I had preserved that accomplishment. And I am afraid there's a skeleton—in a wig—on the ledge of the desk."

After we had both laughed heartily, Traddles wound up by looking with a smile at the fire, and saying, in his forgiving way, "Old Creakle!"

"I have a letter from that old—Rascal here," said I. For I never was less disposed to forgive him the way he used to batter Traddles, than when I saw Traddles so ready to forgive him himself.

"From Creakle the schoolmaster?" exclaimed Traddles. "No!"

"Among the persons who are attracted to me in my rising fame and fortune," said I, looking over my letters, "and who discover that they were always much attached to me, is the self-same Creakle. He is not a schoolmaster now, Traddles. He is retired. He is a Middlesex magistrate."

I thought Traddles might be surprised to hear it, but he was not so at all.

"How do you suppose he comes to be a Middlesex magistrate?" said I.

"Oh dear me!" replied Traddles, "it would be very difficult to answer that question. Perhaps he voted for somebody, or lent money to somebody, or bought something of somebody, or otherwise obliged somebody, or jobbed for somebody, who knew somebody who got the lieutenant of the county to nominate him for the commission."

"On the commission he is, at any rate," said I. "And

he writes to me here, that he will be glad to show me, in operation, the only true system of prison discipline; the only unchallengeable way of making sincere and lasting converts and penitents—which, you know, is by solitary confinement. What do you say?"

"To the system?" inquired Traddles, looking grave.

"No. To my accepting the offer, and your going with me?"

"I don't object," said Traddles.

"Then I'll write to say so. You remember (to say nothing of our treatment) this same Creakle turning his son out of doors, I suppose, and the life he used to lead his wife and daughter?"

"Perfectly," said Traddles.

"Yet, if you'll read his letter, you'll find he is the tenderest of men to prisoners convicted of the whole calendar of felonies," said I; "though I can't find that his tenderness extends to any other class of created beings."

Traddles shrugged his shoulders, and was not at all surprised. I had not expected him to be, and was not surprised myself; or my observation of similar practical satires would have been but scanty. We arranged the time of our visit, and I wrote accordingly to Mr. Creakle that evening.

On the appointed day—I think it was the next day, but no matter—Traddles and I repaired to the prison where Mr. Creakle was powerful. It was an immense and solid building, erected at a vast expense. I could not help thinking, as we approached the gate, what an uproar would have been made in the country, if any deluded man had proposed to spend one half the money it had cost, on the erection of an industrial school for the young, or a house of refuge for the deserving old.

In an office that might have been on the ground-floor of the Tower of Babel, it was so massively constructed, we were presented to our old schoolmaster; who was one of a group, composed of two or three of the busier sort of magistrates, and some visitors they had brought. He received me, like a man who had formed my mind in bygone years, and had always loved me tenderly. On my introducing Traddles, Mr. Creakle expressed, in like manner, but in an inferior degree, that he had always been Traddles's guide, philosopher, and friend. Our venerable instructor was a

great deal older, and not improved in appearance. His face was as fiery as ever; his eyes were as small, and rather deeper set. The scanty, wet-looking grey hair, by which I remembered him, was almost gone; and the thick veins in his bald head were none the more agreeable to look at.

After some conversation among these gentlemen, from which I might have supposed that there was nothing in the world to be legitimately taken into account but the supreme comfort of prisoners, at any expense, and nothing on the wide earth to be done outside prison-doors, we began our inspection. It being then just dinner-time, we went, first into the great kitchen, where every prisoner's dinner was in course of being set out separately (to be handed to him in his cell), with the regularity and precision of clockwork. I said aside, to Traddles, that I wondered whether it occurred to anybody, that there was a striking contrast between these plentiful repasts of choice quality, and the dinners, not to say of paupers, but of soldiers, sailors, labourers, the great bulk of the honest, working community; of whom not one man in five hundred ever dined half so well. But I learned that "the system" required high living; and, in short, to dispose of the system, once for all, I found that on that head and on all others, "the system" put an end to all doubts, and disposed of all anomalies. Nobody appeared to have the least idea that there was any other system, but *the* system, to be considered.

As we were going through some of the magnificent passages, I inquired of Mr. Creakle and his friends what were supposed to be the main advantages of this all-governing and universally overriding system? I found them to be the perfect isolation of prisoners—so that no one man in confinement there, knew anything about another; and the reduction of prisoners to a wholesome state of mind, leading to sincere contrition and repentance.

Now, it struck me, when we began to visit individuals in their cells, and to traverse the passages in which those cells were, and to have the manner of the going to chapel and so forth, explained to us, that there was a strong probability of the prisoners knowing a good deal about each other, and of their carrying on a pretty complete system of intercourse. This, at the time I write, has been proved, I believe, to be the case; but, as it would have been flat blasphemy against the system to have hinted such a doubt

then, I looked out for the penitence as diligently as I could.

And here again, I had great misgivings. I found as prevalent a fashion in the form of the penitence, as I had left outside in the forms of the coats and waistcoats in the windows of the tailors' shops. I found a vast amount of profession, varying very little in character: varying very little (which I thought exceedingly suspicious), even in words. I found a great many foxes, disparaging whole vineyards of inaccessible grapes; but I found very few foxes whom I would have trusted within reach of a bunch. Above all, I found that the most professing men were the greatest objects of interest; and that their conceit, their vanity, their want of excitement, and their love of deception (which many of them possessed to an almost incredible extent, as their histories showed), all prompted to these professions, and were all gratified by them.

However, I heard so repeatedly, in the course of our goings to and fro, of a certain Number Twenty Seven, who was the Favourite, and who really appeared to be a Model Prisoner, that I resolved to suspend my judgment until I should see Twenty Seven. Twenty Eight, I understood, was also a bright particular star; but it was his misfortune to have his glory a little dimmed by the extraordinary lustre of Twenty Seven. I heard so much of Twenty Seven, of his pious admonitions to everybody around him, and of the beautiful letters he constantly wrote to his mother (whom he seemed to consider in a very bad way), that I became quite impatient to see him.

I had to restrain my impatience for some time, on account of Twenty Seven being reserved for a concluding effect. But, at last, we came to the door of his cell; and Mr. Creakle, looking through a little hole in it, reported to us, in a state of the greatest admiration, that he was reading a Hymn Book

There was such a rush of heads immediately, to see Number Twenty Seven reading his Hymn Book, that the little hole was blocked up, six or seven heads deep. To remedy this inconvenience, and give us an opportunity of conversing with Twenty Seven in all his purity, Mr. Creakle directed the door of the cell to be unlocked, and Twenty Seven to be invited out into the passage. This was done; and whom should Traddles and I then behold, to our

amazement, in this converted Number Twenty Seven, but Uriah Heep!

He knew us directly; and said, as he came out—with the old writhe—

"How do you do, Mr. Copperfield. How do you do, Mr. Traddles?"

This recognition caused a general admiration in the party. I rather thought that everyone was struck by his not being proud, and taking notice of us.

"Well, Twenty Seven," said Mr. Creakle, mournfully admiring him. "How do you find yourself to-day?"

"I am very umble, Sir!" replied Uriah Heep.

"You are always so, Twenty Seven," said Mr. Creakle.

Here, another gentleman asked, with extreme anxiety: "Are you quite comfortable?"

"Yes, I thank you, Sir!" said Uriah Heep, looking in that direction. "Far more comfortable here, than ever I was outside. I see my follies now, Sir, that's what makes me comfortable."

Several gentlemen were much affected; and a third questioner, forcing himself to the front, inquired with extreme feeling: "How do you find the beef?"

"Thank you, Sir," replied Uriah, glancing in the new direction of this voice, "it was tougher yesterday than I could wish; but it's my duty to bear. I have committed follies, gentlemen," said Uriah, looking round with a meek smile, "and I ought to bear the consequences without repining."

A murmur, partly of gratification at Twenty Seven's celestial state of mind, and partly of indignation against the Contractor who had given him any cause of complaint (a note of which was immediately made by Mr. Creakle), having subsided, Twenty Seven stood in the midst of us, as if he felt himself the principal object of merit in a highly meritorious museum. That we, the neophytes, might have an excess of light shining upon us all at once, orders were given to let out Twenty Eight.

I had been so much astonished already, that I only felt a kind of resigned wonder when Mr. Littimer walked forth, reading a good book!

"Twenty Eight," said a gentleman in spectacles, who had not yet spoken, "you complained last week, my good fellow, of the cocoa. How has it been since?"

"I thank you, Sir," said Mr. Littimer, "it has been better made. If I might take the liberty of saying so, Sir, I don't think the milk which is boiled with it is quite genuine; but I am aware, Sir, that there is great adulteration of milk, in London, and that the article in a pure state is difficult to be obtained."

It appeared to me that the gentleman in spectacles backed his Twenty Eight against Mr. Creakle's Twenty Seven, for each of them took his own man in hand.

"What is your state of mind, Twenty Eight?" said the questioner in spectacles.

"I thank you, Sir," returned Mr. Littimer; "I see my follies now, Sir. I am a good deal troubled when I think of the sins of my former companions, Sir; but I trust they may find forgiveness."

"You are quite happy yourself?" said the questioner, nodding encouragement.

"I am much obliged to you, Sir," returned Mr. Littimer. "Perfectly so."

"Is there anything at all on your mind, now?" said the questioner. "If so, mention it, Twenty Eight."

"Sir," said Mr. Littimer, without looking up, "if my eyes have not deceived me, there is a gentleman present who was acquainted with me in my former life. It may be profitable to that gentleman to know, Sir, that I attribute my past follies, entirely to having lived a thoughtless life in the service of young men; and to having allowed myself to be led by them into weaknesses, which I had not the strength to resist. I hope that gentleman will take warning, Sir, and will not be offended at my freedom. It is for his good. I am conscious of my own past follies. I hope he may repent of all the wickedness and sin, to which he has been a party."

I observed that several gentlemen were shading their eyes, each, with one hand, as if they had just come into church.

"This does you credit, Twenty Eight," returned the questioner. "I should have expected it of you. Is there anything else?"

"Sir," returned Mr. Littimer, slightly lifting up his eyebrows, but not his eyes, "there was a young woman who fell into dissolute courses, that I endeavoured to save, Sir, but could not rescue. I beg that gentleman, if he has

it in his power, to inform that young woman from me that I forgive her her bad conduct towards myself; and that I call her to repentance—if he will be so good."

"I have no doubt, Twenty Eight," returned the questioner, "that the gentleman you refer to feels very strongly—as we all must—what you have so properly said. We will not detain you."

"I thank you, Sir," said Mr. Littimer. "Gentlemen, I wish you a good day, and hoping you and your families will also see your wickedness, and amend!"

With this, Number Twenty Eight retired, after a glance between him and Uriah; as if they were not altogether unknown to each other, through some medium of communication; and a murmur went round the group, as his door shut upon him, that he was a most respectable man, and a beautiful case.

"Now, Twenty Seven," said Mr. Creakle, entering on a clear stage with *his* man, "is there anything that anyone can do for you? If so, mention it."

"I would umbly ask, Sir," returned Uriah, with a jerk of his malevolent head, "for leave to write again to mother."

"It shall certainly be granted," said Mr. Creakle.

"Thank you, Sir! I am anxious about mother. I am afraid she ain't safe."

Somebody incautiously asked, what from? But there was a scandalised whisper of "Hush!"

"Immortally safe, Sir," returned Uriah, writhing in the direction of the voice. "I should wish mother to be got into my state. I never should have been got into my present state if I hadn't come here. I wish mother had come here. It would be better for everybody, if they got took up, and was brought here."

This sentiment gave unbounded satisfaction—greater satisfaction, I think, than anything that had passed yet.

"Before I come here," said Uriah, stealing a look at us, as if he would have blighted the outer world to which we belonged, if he could, "I was given to follies; but now I am sensible of my follies. There's a deal of sin outside. There's a deal of sin in mother. There's nothing but sin everywhere—except here."

"You are quite changed?" said Mr. Creakle.

"Oh dear, yes, Sir!" cried this hopeful penitent.

"You wouldn't relapse, if you were going out?" asked somebody else.

"Oh de-ar no, Sir!"

"Well!" said Mr. Creakle, "this is very gratifying. You have addressed Mr. Copperfield, Twenty Seven. Do you wish to say anything further to him?"

"You knew me, a long time before I came here and was changed, Mr. Copperfield," said Uriah, looking at me; and a more villainous look I never saw, even on his visage. "You knew me when, in spite of my follies, I was umble among them that was proud, and meek among them that was violent—you was violent to me yourself, Mr. Copperfield. Once, you struck me a blow in the face, you know."

General commiseration. Several indignant glances directed at me.

"But I forgive you, Mr. Copperfield," said Uriah, making his forgiving nature the subject of a most impious and awful parallel, which I shall not record. "I forgive everybody. It would ill become me to bear malice. I freely forgive you, and I hope you'll curb your passions in future. I hope Mr. W. will repent, and Miss W., and all of that sinful lot. You've been visited with affliction, and I hope it may do you good; but you'd better have come here. Mr. W. had better have come here, and Miss W. too. The best wish I could give you, Mr. Copperfield, and give all of you gentlemen, is, that you could be took up and brought here. When I think of my past follies, and my present state, I am sure it would be best for you. I pity all who ain't brought here!"

He sneaked back into his cell, amidst a little chorus of approbation; and both Traddles and I experienced a great relief when he was locked in.

It was a characteristic feature in this repentance, that I was fain to ask what these two men had done, to be there at all. That appeared to be the last thing about which they had anything to say. I addressed myself to one of the two warders, who, I suspected, from certain latent indications in their faces, knew pretty well what all this stir was worth.

"Do you know," said I, as we walked along the passage, "what felony was Number Twenty Seven's last 'folly'?"

The answer was that it was a Bank case.

"A fraud on the Bank of England?" I asked.

"Yes, Sir. Fraud, forgery, and conspiracy. He and some others. He set the others on. It was a deep plot for a large sum. Sentence, transportation for life. Twenty Seven was the knowingest bird of the lot, and had very nearly kept himself safe; but not quite. The Bank was just able to put salt upon his tail—and only just."

"Do you know Twenty Eight's offence?"

"Twenty Eight," returned my informant, speaking throughout in a low tone, and looking over his shoulder as we walked along the passage, to guard himself from being overheard, in such an unlawful reference to these Immaculates, by Creakle and the rest; "Twenty Eight (also transportation) got a place, and robbed a young master of a matter of two hundred and fifty pounds in money and valuables, the night before they were going abroad. I particularly recollect his case, from his being took by a dwarf."

"A what?"

"A little woman. I have forgot her name."

"Not Mowcher?"

"That's it! He had eluded pursuit, and was going to America in a flaxen wig and whiskers, and such a complete disguise as never you see in all your born days; when the little woman, being in Southampton, met him walking along the street—picked him out with her sharp eye in a moment—ran betwixt his legs to upset him—and held on to him like grim Death."

"Excellent Miss Mowcher!" cried I.

"You'd have said so, if you had seen her, standing on a chair in the witness-box at his trial, as I did," said my friend. "He cut her face right open, and pounded her in the most brutal manner, when she took him; but she never loosed her hold till he was locked up. She held so tight to him, in fact, that the officers were obliged to take 'em both together. She gave her evidence in the gamest way, and was highly complimented by the Bench, and cheered right home to her lodgings. She said in Court that she'd have took him single-handed (on account of what she knew concerning him), if he had been Samson. And it's my belief she would!"

It was mine too, and I highly respected Miss Mowcher for it.

We had now seen all there was to see. It would have

been in vain to represent to such a man as the worshipful Mr. Creakle, that Twenty Seven and Twenty Eight were perfectly consistent and unchanged; that exactly what they were then, they had always been; that the hypocritical knaves were just the subjects to make that sort of profession in such a place; that they knew its market-value at least as well as we did, in the immediate service it would do them when they were expatriated; in a word, that it was a rotten, hollow, painfully suggestive piece of business altogether. We left them to their system and themselves, and went home wondering.

"Perhaps it's a good thing, Traddles," said I, "to have an unsound Hobby ridden hard; for it's the sooner ridden to death."

"I hope so," replied Traddles.

CHAPTER LXII.

A LIGHT SHINES ON MY WAY.

The year came round to Christmas-time, and I had been at home above two months. I had seen Agnes frequently. However loud the general voice might be in giving me encouragement, and however fervent the emotions and endeavours to which it roused me, I heard her lightest word of praise as I heard nothing else.

At least once a week, and sometimes oftener, I rode over there, and passed the evening. I usually rode back at night; for the old unhappy sense was always hovering about me now—most sorrowfully when I left her—and I was glad to be up and out, rather than wandering over the past in weary wakefulness or miserable dreams. I wore away the longest part of many wild sad nights, in those rides; reviving, as I went, the thoughts that had occupied me in my long absence.

Or, if I were to say rather that I listened to the echoes of those thoughts, I should better express the truth. They spoke to me from afar off. I had put them at a distance, and accepted my inevitable place. When I read to Agnes what I wrote; when I saw her listening face; moved her to smiles or tears; and heard her cordial voice so earnest

on the shadowy events of that imaginative world in which I lived; I thought what a fate mine might have been—but only thought so, as I had thought after I was married to Dora, what I could have wished my wife to be.

My duty to Agnes, who loved me with a love, which, if I disquieted, I wronged most selfishly and poorly, and could never restore; my matured assurance that I, who had worked out my own destiny, and won what I had impetuously set my heart on, had no right to murmur, and must bear; comprised what I felt and what I had learned. But I loved her: and now it even became some consolation to me, vaguely to conceive a distant day when I might blamelessly avow it; when all this should be over; when I could say "Agnes, so it was when I came home; and now I am old, and I never have loved since!"

She did not once show me any change in herself. What she always had been to me, she still was; wholly unaltered.

Between my aunt and me there had been something, in this connexion, since the night of my return, which I cannot call a restraint, or an avoidance of the subject, so much as an implied understanding that we thought of it together, but did not shape our thoughts into words. When, according to our old custom, we sat before the fire at night, we often fell into this train; as naturally, and as consciously to each other, as if we had unreservedly said so. But we preserved an unbroken silence. I believed that she had read, or partly read, my thoughts that night; and that she fully comprehended why I gave mine no more distinct expression.

This Christmas-time being come, and Agnes having reposed no new confidence in me, a doubt that had several times arisen in my mind—whether she could have that perception of the true state of my breast, which restrained her with the apprehension of giving me pain—began to oppress me heavily. If that were so, my sacrifice was nothing; my plainest obligation to her unfulfilled; and every poor action I had shrunk from, I was hourly doing. I resolved to set this right beyond all doubt;—if such a barrier were between us, to break it down at once with a determined hand.

It was—what lasting reason have I to remember it!—a cold, harsh, winter day. There had been snow, some

hours before; and it lay, not deep, but hard-frozen on the ground. Out at sea, beyond my window, the wind blew ruggedly from the north. I had been thinking of it, sweeping over those mountain wastes of snow in Switzerland, then inaccessible to any human foot; and had been speculating which was the lonelier, those solitary regions, or a deserted ocean.

"Riding to-day, Trot?" said my aunt, putting her head in at the door.

"Yes," said I, "I am going over to Canterbury. It's a good day for a ride."

"I hope your horse may think so too," said my aunt; "but at present he is holding down his head and his ears, standing before the door there, as if he thought his stable preferable."

My aunt, I may observe, allowed my horse on the forbidden ground, but had not at all relented toward the donkeys.

"He will be fresh enough, presently!" said I.

"The ride will do his master good, at all events," observed my aunt, glancing at the papers on my table. "Ah, child, you pass a good many hours here! I never thought, when I used to read books, what work it was to write them."

"It's work enough to read them, sometimes," I returned. "As to the writing, it has its own charms, aunt."

"Ah! I see!" said my aunt. "Ambition, love of approbation, sympathy, and much more, I suppose? Well: go along with you!"

"Do you know anything more," said I, standing composedly before her—she had patted me on the shoulder, and sat down in my chair, "of that attachment of Agnes?"

She looked up in my face a little while, before replying:

"I think I do, Trot."

"Are you confirmed in your impression?" I inquired.

"I think I am, Trot."

She looked so steadfastly at me: with a kind of doubt, or pity, or suspense in her affection: that I summoned the stronger determination to show her a perfectly cheerful face.

"And what is more, Trot——" said my aunt.

"Yes!"

"I think Agnes is going to be married."

"God bless her!" said I, cheerfully.

"God bless her!" said my aunt, "and her husband too!"

I echoed it, parted from my aunt, went lightly down stairs, mounted, and rode away. There was greater reason than before to do what I had resolved to do.

How well I recollect the wintry ride! The frozen particles of ice, brushed from the blades of grass by the wind, and borne across my face; the hard clatter of the horse's hoofs, beating a tune upon the ground; the stiff-tilled soil; the snow-drift, lightly eddying in the chalk-pit as the breeze ruffled it; the smoking team with the waggon of old hay, stopping to breathe on the hill-top, and shaking their bells musically; the whitened slopes and sweeps of Down-land lying against the dark sky, as if they were drawn on a huge slate!

I found Agnes alone. The little girls had gone to their own homes now, and she was alone by the fire, reading. She put down her book on seeing me come in; and having welcomed me as usual, took her work-basket and sat in one of the old-fashioned windows.

I sat beside her on the window-seat, and we talked of what I was doing, and when it would be done, and of the progress I had made since my last visit. Agnes was very cheerful; and laughingly predicted that I should soon become too famous to be talked to, on such subjects.

"So I make the most of the present time, you see," said Agnes, "and talk to you while I may."

As I looked at her beautiful face, observant of her work, she raised her mild clear eyes, and saw that I was looking at her.

"You are thoughtful to-day, Trotwood!"

"Agnes, shall I tell you what about? I came to tell you."

She put aside her work, as she was used to do when we were seriously discussing anything; and gave me her whole attention.

"My dear Agnes, do you doubt my being true to you?"

"No!" she answered, with a look of astonishment.

"Do you doubt my being what I always have been to you?"

"No!" she answered, as before.

"Do you remember that I tried to tell you, when I came

home, what a debt of gratitude I owed you, dearest Agnes, and how fervently I felt towards you?"

"I remember it," she said, gently, "very well."

"You have a secret," said I. "Let me share it, Agnes."

She cast down her eyes, and trembled.

"I could hardly fail to know, even if I had not heard—but from other lips than yours, Agnes, which seems strange—that there is some one upon whom you have bestowed the treasure of your love. Do not shut me out of what concerns your happiness so nearly! If you can trust me, as you say you can, and as I know you may, let me be your friend, your brother, in this matter, of all others!"

With an appealing, almost a reproachful glance, she rose from the window; and hurrying across the room as if without knowing where, put her hands before her face, and burst into such tears as smote me to the heart.

And yet they awakened something in me, bringing promise to my heart. Without my knowing why, these tears allied themselves with the quietly sad smile which was so fixed in my remembrance, and shook me more with hope than fear or sorrow.

"Agnes! Sister! Dearest! What have I done!"

"Let me go away, Trotwood. I am not well. I am not myself. I will speak to you by-and-by—another time. I will write to you. Don't speak to me now. Don't! don't!"

I sought to recollect what she had said, when I had spoken to her on that former night, of her affection needing no return. It seemed a very world that I must search through in a moment.

"Agnes, I cannot bear to see you so, and think that I have been the cause. My dearest girl, dearer to me than anything in life, if you are unhappy, let me share your unhappiness. If you are in need of help or counsel, let me try to give it to you. If you have indeed a burden on your heart, let me try to lighten it. For whom do I live now, Agnes, if it is not for you!"

"Oh, spare me! I am not myself! Another time!" was all I could distinguish.

Was it a selfish error that was leading me away? Or, having once a clue to hope, was there something opening to me that I had not dared to think of?

"I must say more. I cannot let you leave me so! For Heaven's sake, Agnes, let us not mistake each other after

all these years, and all that has come and gone with them! I must speak plainly. If you have any lingering thought that I could envy the happiness you will confer; that I could not resign you to a dearer protector, of your own choosing; that I could not, from my removed place, be a contented witness of your joy; dismiss it, for I don't deserve it! I have not suffered quite in vain. You have not taught me quite in vain. There is no alloy of self in what I feel for you."

She was quiet now. In a little time, she turned her pale face towards me, and said in a low voice, broken here and there, but very clear:

"I owe it to your pure friendship for me, Trotwood—which, indeed, I do not doubt—to tell you, you are mistaken. I can do no more. If I have sometimes, in the course of years, wanted help and counsel, they have come to me. If I have sometimes been unhappy, the feeling has passed away. If I have ever had a burden on my heart, it has been lightened for me. If I have any secret, it is—no new one; and is—not what you suppose. I cannot reveal it, or divide it. It has long been mine, and must remain mine."

"Agnes! Stay! A moment!"

She was going away, but I detained her. I clasped my arm about her waist. "In the course of years!" "It is not a new one!" New thoughts and hopes were whirling through my mind, and all the colours of my life were changing.

"Dearest Agnes! Whom I so respect and honour—whom I so devotedly love! When I came here to-day, I thought that nothing could have wrested this confession from me. I thought I could have kept it in my bosom all our lives, till we were old. But, Agnes, if I have indeed any new-born hope that I may ever call you something more than Sister, widely different from Sister!——"

Her tears fell fast; but they were not like those she had lately shed, and I saw my hope brighten in them.

"Agnes! Ever my guide, and best support! If you had been more mindful of yourself, and less of me, when we grew up here together, I think my heedless fancy never would have wandered from you. But you were so much better than I, so necessary to me in every boyish hope and disappointment, that to have you to confide in, and rely

upon in everything, became a second nature, supplanting for the time the first and greater one of loving you as I do!"

Still weeping, but not sadly—joyfully! And clasped in my arms as she had never been, as I had thought she never was to be!

"When I loved Dora—fondly, Agnes, as you know——"

"Yes!" she cried, earnestly. "I am glad to know it!"

"When I loved her—even then, my love would have been incomplete, without your sympathy. I had it, and it was perfected. And when I lost her, Agnes, what should I have been without you, still!"

Closer in my arms, nearer to my heart, her trembling hand upon my shoulder, her sweet eyes shining through her tears, on mine!

"I went away, dear Agnes, loving you. I stayed away, loving you. I returned home, loving you!"

And now, I tried to tell her of the struggle I had had, and the conclusion I had come to. I tried to lay my mind before her, truly, and entirely. I tried to show her, how I had hoped I had come into the better knowledge of myself and of her; how I had resigned myself to what that better knowledge brought; and how I had come there, even that day, in my fidelity to this. If she did so love me (I said) that she could take me for her husband, she could do so, on no deserving of mine, except upon the truth of my love for her, and the trouble in which it had ripened to be what it was; and hence it was that I revealed it. And O, Agnes, even out of thy true eyes, in that same time, the spirit of my child-wife looked upon me, saying it was well; and winning me, through thee, to tenderest recollections of the Blossom that had withered in its bloom!

"I am so blest, Trotwood—my heart is so overcharged—but there is one thing I must say."

"Dearest, what?"

She laid her gentle hands upon my shoulders, and looked calmly in my face.

"Do you know, yet, what it is?"

"I am afraid to speculate on what it is. Tell me, my dear."

"I have loved you all my life!"

Oh, we were happy, we were happy! Our tears were not for the trials (hers so much the greater), through which we had come to be thus, but for the rapture of being thus, never to be divided more!

We walked, that winter evening, in the fields together; and the blessed calm within us seemed to be partaken by the frosty air. The early stars began to shine while we were lingering on, and looking up to them we thanked our God for having guided us to this tranquillity.

We stood together in the same old-fashioned window at night, when the moon was shining; Agnes with her quiet eyes raised up to it; I following her glance. Long miles of road then opened out before my mind; and, toiling on, I saw a ragged wayworn boy forsaken and neglected, who should come to call even the heart now beating against mine, his own.

It was nearly dinner-time next day when we appeared before my aunt. She was up in my study, Peggotty said: which it was her pride to keep in readiness and order for me. We found her, in her spectacles, sitting by the fire.

"Goodness me!" said my aunt, peering through the dusk, "who's this you're bringing home?"

"Agnes," said I.

As we had arranged to say nothing at first, my aunt was not a little discomfited. She darted a hopeful glance at me, when I said "Agnes;" but seeing that I looked as usual, she took off her spectacles in despair, and rubbed her nose with them.

She greeted Agnes heartily, nevertheless; and we were soon in the lighted parlour down stairs, at dinner. My aunt put on her spectacles twice or thrice, to take another look at me, but as often took them off again, disappointed, and rubbed her nose with them. Much to the discomfiture of Mr. Dick, who knew this to be a bad symptom.

"By-the-by, aunt," said I, after dinner; "I have been speaking to Agnes about what you told me."

"Then, Trot," said my aunt, turning scarlet, "you did wrong, and broke your promise."

"You are not angry, aunt, I trust? I am sure you won't be, when you learn that Agnes is not unhappy in any attachment."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said my aunt.

As my aunt appeared to be annoyed, I thought the best way was to cut her annoyance short. I took Agnes in my arm to the back of her chair, and we both leaned over her. My aunt, with one clap of her hands, and one look through her spectacles, immediately went into hysterics, for the first and only time in all my knowledge of her.

The hysterics called up Peggotty. The moment my aunt was restored, she flew at Peggotty, and calling her a silly old creature, hugged her with all her might. After that, she hugged Mr. Dick (who was highly honoured, but a good deal surprised); and after that, told them why. Then, we were all happy together.

I could not discover whether my aunt, in her last short conversation with me, had fallen on a pious fraud, or had really mistaken the state of my mind. It was quite enough, she said, that she had told me Agnes was going to be married; and that I now knew better than any one how true it was.

We were married within a fortnight. Traddles and Sophy, and Doctor and Mrs. Strong, were the only guests at our quiet wedding. We left them full of joy; and drove away together. Clasped in my embrace, I held the source of every worthy aspiration I had ever had; the centre of myself, the circle of my life, my own, my wife; my love of whom was founded on a rock!

"Dearest husband!" said Agnes. "Now that I may call you by that name, I have one thing more to tell you."

"Let me hear it, love."

"It grows out of the night when Dora died. She sent you for me."

"She did."

"She told me that she left me something. Can you think what it was?"

I believed I could. I drew the wife who had so long loved me, closer to my side.

"She told me that she made a last request to me, and left me a last charge."

"And it was——"

"That only I would occupy this vacant place."

And Agnes laid her head upon my breast, and wept; and I wept with her, though we were so happy.

CHAPTER LXIII.

A VISITOR.

WHAT I have purposed to record is nearly finished; but there is yet an incident conspicuous in my memory, on which it often rests with delight, and without which one thread in the web I have spun, would have a ravelled end.

I had advanced in fame and fortune, my domestic joy was perfect, I had been married ten happy years. Agnes and I were sitting by the fire, in our house in London, one night in spring, and three of our children were playing in the room, when I was told that a stranger wished to see me.

He had been asked if he came on business, and had answered No; he had come for the pleasure of seeing me, and had come a long way. He was an old man, my servant said, and looked like a farmer.

As this sounded mysterious to the children, and moreover was like the beginning of a favourite story Agnes used to tell them, introductory to the arrival of a wicked old Fairy in a cloak who hated everybody, it produced some commotion. One of our boys laid his head in his mother's lap to be out of harm's way, and little Agnes (our eldest child) left her doll in a chair to represent her, and thrust out her little heap of golden curls from between the window-curtains, to see what happened next.

"Let him come in here!" said I.

There soon appeared, pausing in the dark doorway as he entered, a hale, grey-haired old man. Little Agnes, attracted by his looks, had run to bring him in, and I had not yet clearly seen his face, when my wife, starting up, cried out to me, in a pleased and agitated voice, that it was Mr. Peggotty!

It *was* Mr. Peggotty. An old man now, but in a ruddy, hearty, strong old age. When our first emotion was over, and he sat before the fire with the children on his knees, and the blaze shining on his face, he looked, to me, as vigorous and robust, withal as handsome, an old man, as ever I had seen.

"Mas'r Davy," said he. And the old name in the old tone fell so naturally on my ear! "Mas'r Davy, 'tis a joyful hour as I see you, once more, 'long with your own trew wife!"

"A joyful hour indeed, old friend!" cried I.

"And these heer pretty ones," said Mr. Peggotty. "To look at these heer flowers! Why, Mas'r Davy, you was but the heighth of the littlest of these when I first see you! When Em'ly warn't no bigger, and our poor lad were *but* a lad!"

"Time has changed me more than it has changed you since then," said I. "But let these dear rogues go to bed; and as no house in England but this must hold you, tell me where to send for your luggage (is the old black bag among it, that went so far, I wonder!), and then, over a glass of Yarmouth grog, we will have the tidings of ten years!"

"Are you alone?" asked Agnes.

"Yes, ma'am," he said, kissing her hand, "quite alone."

We sat him between us, not knowing how to give him welcome enough; and as I began to listen to his old familiar voice, I could have fancied he was still pursuing his long journey in search of his darling niece.

"It's a mort of water," said Mr. Peggotty, "fur to come across, and on'y stay a matter of fower weeks. But water ('specially when 'tis salt) comes nat'ral to me; and friends is dear, and I am heer.—Which is verse," said Mr. Peggotty, surprised to find it out, "though I hadn't such intentions."

"Are you going back those many thousand miles, so soon?" asked Agnes.

"Yes, ma'am," he returned. "I giv the promise to Em'ly, afore I come away. You see, I doen't grow younger as the years comes round, and if I hadn't sailed as 'twas, most like I shouldn't never have done't. And it's allus been on my mind, as I *must* come and see Mas'r Davy and your own sweet blooming self, in your wedded happiness, afore I got to be too old."

He looked at us, as if he could never feast his eyes on us sufficiently. Agnes laughingly put back some scattered locks of his grey hair, that he might see us better.

"And now tell us," said I, "everything relating to your fortunes."

"Our fortuns, Mas'r Davy," he rejoined, "is soon told. We haven't fared nohows, but fared to thrive. We've allus thrived. We've worked as we ought to't, and maybe we lived a lettle hard at first or so, but we have allus thrived. What with sheep-farming, and what with stock-farming, and what with one thing and what with t'other, we are as well to do, as well could be. Theer's been kiender a blessing fell upon us," said Mr. Peggotty, reverentially inclining his head, "and we've done nowt but prosper. That is, in the long run. If not yesterday, why then to-day. If not to-day, why then to-morrow."

"And Emily?" said Agnes and I, both together.

"Em'ly," said he, "arter you left her, ma'am—and I never heerd her saying of her prayers at night, t'other side the canvas screen, when we was settled in the Bush, but what I heerd your name—and arter she and me lost sight of Mas'r Davy, that theer shining sundown—was that low, at first, that, if she had know'd then what Mas'r Davy kep from us so kind and thowtful, 'tis my opinion she'd have drooped away. But theer was some poor folks aboard as had illness among 'em, and she took care of *them;* and there was the children in our company, and she took care of *them;* and so she got to be busy, and to be doing good, and that helped her."

"When did she first hear of it?" I asked.

"I kep it from her arter I heerd on't," said Mr. Peggotty, "going on nigh a year. We was living then in a solitary place, but among the beautifullest trees, and with the roses a covering our Beein' to the roof. Theer come along one day, when I was out a working on the land, a traveller from our own Norfolk or Suffolk in England (I doen't rightly mind which), and of course we took him in, and giv him to eat and drink, and made him welcome. We all do that, all the colony over. He'd got an old newspaper with him, and some other account in print of the storm. That's how she know'd it. When I come home at night, I found she know'd it."

He dropped his voice as he said these words, and the gravity I so well remembered overspread his face.

"Did it change her much?" we asked.

"Ay, for a good long time," he said, shaking his head; "if not to this present hour. But I think the solitoode done her good. And she had a deal to mind in the way of

poultry and the like, and minded of it, and come through. I wonder," he said thoughtfully, "if you could see my Em'ly now, Mas'r Davy, whether you'd know her!"

"Is she so altered?" I inquired.

"I doen't know. I see her ev'ry day, and doen't know; but, odd-times, I have thowt so. A slight figure," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at the fire, "kiender worn; soft, sorrowful, blue eyes; a delicate face; a pritty head, leaning a little down; a quiet voice and way—timid a'most. That's Em'ly!"

We silently observed him as he sat, still looking at the fire.

"Some thinks," he said, "as her affection was ill-bestowed; some, as her marriage was broke off by death. No one knows how 'tis. She might have married well, a mort of times, 'But, uncle,' she says to me, 'that's gone for ever.' Cheerful along with me; retired when others is by; fond of going any distance fur to teach a child, or fur to tend a sick person, or fur to do some kindness tow'rds a young girl's wedding (and she's done a many, but has never seen one); fondly loving of her uncle; patient; liked by young and old; sowt out by all that has any trouble. That's Em'ly!"

He drew his hand across his face, and with a half-suppressed sigh looked up from the fire.

"Is Martha with you yet?" I asked.

"Martha," he replied, "got married, Mas'r Davy, in the second year. A young man, a farm-labourer, as come by us on his way to market with his mas'r's drays—a journey of over five hundred mile, theer and back—made offers fur to take her fur his wife (wives is very scarce theer), and then to set up fur their two selves in the Bush. She spoke to me fur to tell him her trew story. I did. They was married, and they live fower hundred mile away from any voices but their own and the singing birds."

"Mrs. Gummidge?" I suggested.

It was a pleasant key to touch, for Mr. Peggotty suddenly burst into a roar of laughter, and rubbed his hands up and down his legs, as he had been accustomed to do when he enjoyed himself in the long-shipwrecked boat.

"Would you believe it!" he said. "Why, someun even made offers fur to marry *her!* If a ship's cook that was turning settler, Mas'r Davy, didn't make offers fur to

marry Missis Gummidge, I'm Gormed—and I can't say no fairer than that!"

I never saw Agnes laugh so. This sudden ecstasy on the part of Mr. Peggotty was so delightful to her, that she could not leave off laughing; and the more she laughed the more she made me laugh, and the greater Mr. Peggotty's ecstasy became, and the more he rubbed his legs.

"And what did Mrs. Gummidge say?" I asked, when I was grave enough.

"If you'll believe me," returned Mr. Peggotty, "Missis Gummidge, 'stead of saying 'thank you, I'm much obleeged to you, I ain't a going fur to change my condition at my time of life,' up'd with a bucket as was standing by, and laid it over that theer ship's cook's head till he sung out fur help, and I went in and reskied of him."

Mr. Peggotty burst into a great roar of laughter, and Agnes and I both kept him company.

"But I must say this, for the good creetur," he resumed, wiping his face when we were quite exhausted; "she has been all she said she'd be to us, and more. She's the willingest, the trewest, the honestest-helping woman, Mas'r Davy, as ever draw'd the breath of life. I have never known her to be lone and lorn, for a single minute, not even when the colony was all afore us, and we was new to it. And thinking of the old 'un is a thing she never done, I do assure you, since she left England!"

"Now, last, not least, Mr. Micawber," said I. "He has paid off every obligation he incurred here—even to Traddles's bill, you remember, my dear Agnes—and therefore we may take it for granted that he is doing well. But what is the latest news of him?"

Mr. Peggotty, with a smile, put his hand in his breast-pocket, and produced a flat-folded, paper parcel, from which he took out, with much care, a little odd-looking newspaper.

"You are to unnerstan', Mas'r Davy," said he, "as we have left the Bush now, being so well to do; and have gone right away round to Port Middlebay Harbour, wheer theer's what *we* call a town."

"Mr. Micawber was in the Bush near you," said I.

"Bless you, yes," said Mr. Peggotty, "and turned to with a will. I never wish to meet a better gen'l'man for turning to, with a will. I've seen that theer bald head of

his, a perspiring in the sun, Mas'r Davy, till I a'most thowt it would have melted away. And now he's a magistrate."

"A magistrate, eh?" said I.

Mr. Peggotty pointed to a certain paragraph in the newspaper, where I read aloud as follows, from the "Port Middlebay Times:"

"☞ The public dinner to our distinguished fellow-colonist and townsman, WILKINS MICAWBER, ESQUIRE, Port Middlebay District Magistrate, came off yesterday in the large room of the Hotel, which was crowded to suffocation. It is estimated that not fewer than forty-seven persons must have been accommodated with dinner at one time, exclusive of the company in the passage and on the stairs. The beauty, fashion, and exclusiveness of Port Middlebay flocked to do honour to one so deservedly esteemed, so highly talented, and so widely popular. Doctor Mell (of Colonial Salem-House Grammar School, Port Middlebay) presided, and on his right sat the distinguished guest. After the removal of the cloth, and the singing of Non Nobis (beautifully executed, and in which we were at no loss to distinguish the bell-like notes of that gifted amateur, WILKINS MICAWBER, ESQUIRE, JUNIOR), the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were severally given and rapturously received. Dr. Mell, in a speech replete with feeling, then proposed 'Our distinguished Guest, the ornament of our town. May he never leave us but to better himself, and may his success among us be such as to render his bettering himself impossible!' The cheering with which the toast was received defies description. Again and again it rose and fell, like the waves of ocean. At length all was hushed, and WILKINS MICAWBER, ESQUIRE, presented himself to return thanks. Far be it from us, in the present comparatively imperfect state of the resources of our establishment, to endeavour to follow our distinguished townsman through the smoothly-flowing periods of his polished and highly-ornate address! Suffice it to observe, that it was a masterpiece of eloquence; and that those passages in which he more particularly traced his own successful career to its source, and warned the younger portion of his auditory from the shoals of ever incurring pecuniary liabilities which they were unable to liquidate, brought a tear into the manliest

eye present. The remaining toasts were Doctor Mell; Mrs. Micawber (who gracefully bowed her acknowledgments from the side-door, where a galaxy of beauty was elevated on chairs, at once to witness and adorn the gratifying scene); Mrs. Ridger Begs (late Miss Micawber); Mrs. Mell; Wilkins Micawber, Esquire, Junior (who convulsed the assembly by humorously remarking that he found himself unable to return thanks in a speech, but would do so, with their permission, in a song); Mrs. Micawber's Family (well known, it is needless to remark, in the mother-country), &c., &c., &c. At the conclusion of the proceedings the tables were cleared as if by art-magic for dancing. Among the votaries of Terpsichore, who disported themselves until Sol gave warning for departure, Wilkins Micawber, Esquire, Junior, and the lovely and accomplished Miss Helena, fourth daughter of Doctor Mell, were particularly remarkable."

I was looking back to the name of Doctor Mell, pleased to have discovered, in these happier circumstances, Mr. Mell, formerly poor pinched usher to my Middlesex magistrate, when Mr. Peggotty pointing to another part of the paper, my eyes rested on my own name, and I read thus:—

"TO DAVID COPPERFIELD, ESQUIRE,

"THE EMINENT AUTHOR.

"My Dear Sir,

"Years have elapsed, since I had an opportunity of ocularly perusing the lineaments, now familiar to the imaginations of a considerable portion of the civilised world.

"But, my dear Sir, though estranged (by the force of circumstances over which I have had no control) from the personal society of the friend and companion of my youth, I have not been unmindful of his soaring flight. Nor have I been debarred,

'Though seas between us braid ha' roared,'

(Burns) from participating in the intellectual feasts he has spread before us.

"I cannot, therefore, allow of the departure from this place of an individual whom we mutually respect and esteem, without, my dear Sir, taking this public opportu-

nity of thanking you, on my own behalf, and, I may undertake to add, on that of the whole of the Inhabitants of Port Middlebay, for the gratification of which you are the ministering agent.

"Go on, my dear Sir! You are not unknown here, you are not unappreciated. Though 'remote,' we are neither 'unfriended,' 'melancholy,' nor (I may add) 'slow.' Go on, my dear Sir, in your Eagle course! The Inhabitants of Port Middlebay may at least aspire to watch it, with delight, with entertainment, with instruction!

"Among the eyes elevated towards you from this portion of the globe, will ever be found, while it has light and life,

"The
"Eye
"Appertaining to
"WILKINS MICAWBER,
"Magistrate."

I found, on glancing at the remaining contents of the newspaper, that Mr. Micawber was a diligent and esteemed correspondent of that journal. There was another letter from him in the same paper, touching a bridge; there was an advertisement of a collection of similar letters by him, to be shortly republished, in a neat volume, "with considerable additions;" and, unless I am very much mistaken, the Leading Article was his also.

We talked much of Mr. Micawber, on many other evenings while Mr. Peggotty remained with us. He lived with us during the whole term of his stay,—which, I think, was something less than a month,—and his sister and my aunt came to London to see him. Agnes and I parted from him aboard ship, when he sailed; and we shall never part from him more, on earth.

But before he left, he went with me to Yarmouth, to see a little tablet I had put up in the churchyard to the memory of Ham. While I was copying the plain inscription for him at his request, I saw him stoop, and gather a tuft of grass from the grave, and a little earth.

"For Em'ly," he said, as he put it in his breast. "I promised, Mas'r Davy."

CHAPTER LXIV.

A LAST RETROSPECT.

And now my written story ends. I look back, once more—for the last time—before I close these leaves.

I see myself, with Agnes at my side, journeying along the road of life. I see our children and our friends around us; and I hear the roar of many voices, not indifferent to me as I travel on.

What faces are the most distinct to me in the fleeting crowd? Lo, these; all turning to me as I ask my thoughts the question!

Here is my aunt, in stronger spectacles, an old woman of four-score years and more, but upright yet, and a steady walker of six miles at a stretch in winter weather.

Always with her, here comes Peggotty, my good old nurse, likewise in spectacles, accustomed to do needlework at night very close to the lamp, but never sitting down to it without a bit of wax-candle, a yard measure in a little house, and a work-box with a picture of St. Paul's upon the lid.

The cheeks and arms of Peggotty, so hard and red in my childish days, when I wondered why the birds didn't peck her in preference to apples, are shrivelled now; and her eyes, that used to darken their whole neighbourhood in her face, are fainter (though they glitter still); but her rough forefinger, which I once associated with a pocket nutmeg-grater, is just the same, and when I see my least child catching at it as it totters from my aunt to her, I think of our little parlour at home, when I could scarcely walk. My aunt's old disappointment is set right, now. She is godmother to a real living Betsey Trotwood; and Dora (the next in order) says she spoils her.

There is something bulky in Peggotty's pocket. It is nothing smaller than the Crocodile-Book, which is in rather a dilapidated condition by this time, with divers of the leaves torn and stitched across, but which Peggotty exhibits to the children as a precious relic. I find it very

curious to see my own infant face, looking up at me from the crocodile stories; and to be reminded by it of my old acquaintance Brooks of Sheffield.

Among my boys, this summer holiday time, I see an old man making giant kites, and gazing at them in the air, with a delight for which there are no words. He greets me rapturously, and whispers, with many nods and winks, "Trotwood, you will be glad to hear that I shall finish the Memorial when I have nothing else to do, and that your aunt's the most extraordinary woman in the world, Sir!"

Who is this bent lady, supporting herself by a stick, and showing me a countenance in which there are some traces of old pride and beauty, feebly contending with a querulous, imbecile, fretful wandering of the mind? She is in a garden; and near her stands a sharp, dark, withered woman, with a white scar on her lip. Let me hear what they say.

"Rosa, I have forgotten this gentleman's name."

Rosa bends over her, and calls to her, "Mr. Copperfield."

"I am glad to see you, Sir. I am sorry to observe you are in mourning. I hope Time will be good to you!"

Her impatient attendant scolds her, tells her I am not in mourning, bids her look again, tries to rouse her.

"You have seen my son, Sir," says the elderly lady. "Are you reconciled?"

Looking fixedly at me, she puts her hand to her forehead, and moans. Suddenly, she cries, in a terrible voice, "Rosa, come to me. He is dead!" Rosa, kneeling at her feet, by turns caresses her, and quarrels with her; now fiercely telling her, "I loved him better than you ever did!" —now soothing her to sleep on her breast, like a sick child. Thus I leave them; thus I always find them; thus they wear their time away, from year to year.

What ship comes sailing home from India, and what English lady is this, married to a growling old Scotch Crœsus with great flaps of ears? Can this be Julia Mills?

Indeed it is Julia Mills, peevish and fine, with a black man to carry cards and letters to her on a golden salver, and a copper-coloured woman in linen, with a bright handkerchief round her head, to serve her Tiffin in her dressing-room. But Julia keeps no diary in these days; never

sings Affection's Dirge; eternally quarrels with the old Scotch Crœsus, who is a sort of yellow bear with a tanned hide. Julia is steeped in money to the throat, and talks and thinks of nothing else. I liked her better in the Desert of Sahara.

Or perhaps this *is* the Desert of Sahara! For, though Julia has a stately house, and mighty company, and sumptuous dinners every day, I see no green growth near her; nothing that can ever come to fruit or flower. What Julia calls "society," I see; among it Mr. Jack Maldon, from his Patent Place, sneering at the hand that gave it him, and speaking to me, of the Doctor, as "so charmingly antique." But when society is the name for such hollow gentlemen and ladies, Julia, and when its breeding is professed indifference to everything that can advance or can retard mankind, I think we must have lost ourselves in that same Desert of Sahara, and had better find the way out.

And lo, the Doctor, always our good friend, labouring at his Dictionary (somewhere about the letter D), and happy in his home and wife. Also the Old Soldier, on a considerably reduced footing, and by no means so influential as in days of yore!

Working at his chambers in the Temple, with a busy aspect, and his hair (where he is not bald) made more rebellious than ever by the constant friction of his lawyer's wig, I come, in a later time, upon my dear old Traddles. His table is covered with thick piles of papers; and I say, as I look around me:

"If Sophy were your clerk, now, Traddles, she would have enough to do!"

"You may say that, my dear Copperfield! But those were capital days, too, in Holborn Court! Were they not?"

"When she told you you would be a Judge? But it was not the town talk *then!*"

"At all events," says Traddles, "if I ever am one——"

"Why, you know you will be."

"Well, my dear Copperfield, *when* I am one, I shall tell the story, as I said I would."

We walk away, arm in arm. I am going to have a family dinner with Traddles. It is Sophy's birthday; and, on our road, Traddles discourses to me of the good fortune he has enjoyed.

"I really have been able, my dear Copperfield, to do all that I had most at heart. There's the Reverend Horace promoted to that living at four hundred and fifty pounds a year; there are our two boys receiving the very best education, and distinguishing themselves as steady scholars and good fellows; there are three of the girls married very comfortably; there are three more living with us; there are three more keeping house for the Reverend Horace since Mrs. Crewler's decease; and all of them happy."

"Except——" I suggest.

"Except the Beauty," says Traddles. "Yes. It was very unfortunate that she should marry such a vagabond. But there was a certain dash and glare about him that caught her. However, now we have got her safe at our house, and got rid of him, we must cheer her up again."

Traddles's house is one of the very houses—or it easily may have been—which he and Sophy used to parcel out, in their evening-walks. It is a large house; but Traddles keeps his papers in his dressing-room, and his boots with his papers; and he and Sophy squeeze themselves into upper rooms, reserving the best bedrooms for the Beauty and the girls. There is no room to spare in the house; for more of "the girls" are here, and always are here, by some accident or other, than I know how to count. Here, when we go in, is a crowd of them, running down to the door, and handing Traddles about to be kissed, until he is out of breath. Here, established in perpetuity, is the poor Beauty, a widow with a little girl; here, at dinner on Sophy's birthday, are the three married girls with their three husbands, and one of the husband's brothers, and another husband's cousin, and another husband's sister, who appears to me to be engaged to the cousin. Traddles, exactly the same simple, unaffected fellow as he ever was, sits at the foot of the large table like a Patriarch; and Sophy beams upon him, from the head, across a cheerful space that is certainly not glittering with Britannia metal.

And now, as I close my task, subduing my desire to linger yet, these faces fade away. But, one face, shining on me like a heavenly light by which I see all other objects, is above them and beyond them all. And that remains.

I turn my head, and see it, in its beautiful serenity, beside me. My lamp burns low, and I have written far

into the night; but the dear presence, without which I were nothing, bears me company.

O Agnes, O my soul, so may thy face be by me when I close my life indeed; so may I, when realities are melting from me like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upward!

NOTES ON DAVID COPPERFIELD.

INTRODUCTION.

"Mag's Diversions. Being the Personal History of Mr. Thomas Mag the Younger, of Blunderstone House."

Dickens considered this an unsatisfactory title, and proposed three alternative titles. The first of these was Mag's Diversions, being the Personal History, Adventures, Experience, and Observation of Mr. David Mag the Younger, of Blunderstone House; the second omitted Adventures, and Blunderstone House was called Copperfield House; while the third approached more nearly the ultimate choice, Mr. David Mag being transformed into Mr. David Copperfield the Younger and his great-aunt Margaret, although still retaining Mag's Diversions as its leading line.

The following tentative titles, in which the name of David Copperfield is retained and that of Mag entirely discarded, were also forwarded to Mr. Forster for careful consideration, Dickens feeling that, on the whole, he could not improve upon them:

1. The Copperfield Disclosures. Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of Mr. David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone House.

2. The Copperfield Records. Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of Mr. David Copperfield the Younger, of Copperfield Cottage.

3. The Last Living Speech and Confession of David Copperfield, Junior, of Blunderstone Lodge, who was never executed at the Old Bailey. Being his personal history found among his papers.

4. The Copperfield Survey of the World as it Rolled. Being the personal history, experience, and observation, of Mr. David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone Rookery.

5. The Last Will and Testament of David Copperfield,

the Younger, of Blunderstone House, who was never executed at the Old Bailey. Being his personal history, adventures, and worldly experience.

6. The Last Will and Testament of Mr. David Copperfield. Being his personal history, which he left as a legacy.

7. Copperfield, Complete. Being the whole personal history and experience of Mr. David Copperfield of Blunderstone House, which he never meant to be published on any account.

"Or the opening words of No. 7 might be 'Copperfield's Entire'; and 'The Copperfield Confessions' might open Nos. 1 and 2. Now, WHAT SAY YOU?"

The cognomen "Copperfield" was evolved from Trotfield Trotbury, Copperboy, and Copperstone. In a similar way Dickens arrived at other names in the story. For example, "Murdstone" temporarily stood as Harden, Murdle, and Murden; "Steerforth" was originally Steerford; "Littimer," the valet, was Lirrimer; "Mr. Dick" first appeared in manuscript as Mr. Robert; while on the draught of title we find the names of "Wellbury," "Flowerbury," "Magbury," and "Topflower," which were never used. The novelist was much startled when Mr. Forster pointed out to him (what he had never previously noticed) that Copperfield's initials were his own reversed, and protested that it was just in keeping with the fates and chances which were always befalling him. "Why else," he said, "should I so obstinately have kept to that name when once it turned up?"

The "Survey" (No. 4) apparently proved to be the favourite, but it was not adhered to after all, as the words proposed ultimately became these only: "The Personal History, Adventures, Experience, and Observation of David Copperfield the Younger, of Blunderstone Rookery, which he never meant to be Published on any Account"; and with this name the story was launched on the 1st of May, 1849, although in later editions it was curtailed into its simplest form, "David Copperfield."

Doctors' Commons.

Dickens's description of Doctors' Commons, in "Sketches by Boz," shows that his attention was early attracted to this odd ecclesiastical anomaly. The following

accounts of "The Commons," their rise, progress, and fall, are extracted from Lord Bowen, in Mr. Ward's "Reign of Queen Victoria," and from Sir Walter Phillimore's "Ecclesiastical Law."

From Thomas Humphry Ward's "Reign of Queen Victoria," vol. i. p. 301.

"The spiritual or ecclesiastical courts of the country from an early period had exercised authority in matters of testacy and intestacy as regarded personal estate, had issued probates of the wills of those who died possessed of personalty, and letters of administration of those who died without a will. The bulk of the testamentary business of the ecclesiastical courts was chiefly non-contentious—formal representative proceedings where no dispute arose. If the validity of a will or the title to administer was challenged, a suit became necessary, and to this all parties interested were cited. A number of spiritual courts or chambers scattered through England took cognisance of this testamentary procedure—the courts of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the diocesan courts of the bishops, the archdeacons' courts, and other tribunals of still more limited jurisdiction. The Court of Arches, which belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury, served as the appellate centre for the province of Canterbury, and from it a further appeal lay to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, a body that had recently been substituted for the Court of Delegates of Henry VII. Doctors' Commons was the place where the principal ecclesiastical proceedings were held, and a body of advocates and proctors enjoyed in it a monopoly by which the general profession was excluded from audience and practice. All judges and officers of the spiritual courts were appointed by the prelates, and the other functionaries over whose tribunals they presided. They were sometimes lawyers of position, sometimes lawyers of no position at all, sometimes clergymen, and were usually paid by fees. Many offices were granted in succession and reversion, deputies discharging the duties, of which the emoluments were considerable. The inefficiency of the judges, the variations of practice and procedure, the expense, the delay, the frequently inconsistent and mistaken views of law and of fact adopted by the different

authorities, the anachronism of a system which permitted civil rights to be decided by judges not appointed by, nor responsible to, the Crown, and, finally, a general sense that these tribunals were a soil in which abuses grew and flourished, rendered their fall inevitable. The flavour, the air, the humorous absurdity of many abuses in many branches of the law have been preserved to us by the pen of Charles Dickens. Writers of sentimental fiction not unfrequently exercise their powers of sarcasm on the subject of the enormities of law by inventing for the law courts an imaginary procedure which never yet was seen, and then denouncing its iniquities. But the caricatures of English law, at the beginning of the reign, which Dickens has made immortal, are full of the insight of a great artist—have come to us direct from the brain of one who has sat in court and watched—represent real scenes and incidents as they might well appear to the uninitiated in the 'gallery.'

"His pictures of the chancery suit of 'Jarndyce and Jarndyce,' of the common jury trial of 'Bardell *v.* Pickwick,' contain genuine history. In "David Copperfield" he has sketched with his usual felicity the fraternity of Doctors' Commons and the ecclesiastical officials who thronged its purlieus. Like so many other of the antiquated subjects of his satire, Doctors' Commons was soon destined to decay. A royal Court of Probate was established in its place at Westminster Hall, with district registries throughout the kingdom; and the various ecclesiastical jurisdictions which the new court superseded ceased to exist thenceforward, so far as testamentary causes were concerned."

From Phillimore's "Ecclesiastical Law," vol. i. p. 935.

"In the Report of the Ecclesiastical Courts Commissioners of 1832 it was stated as follows:

"'The ecclesiastical laws, as now existing, have been for upwards of three centuries administered, in the principal courts, by a body of men associated, as a distinct profession, for the practice of the civil and canon laws.

"'Some of the members of this body, in the year 1567, purchased the site upon which Doctors' Commons now stands, on which, at their own expense, they erected houses for the residence of the judges and advocates, and

proper buildings for holding the ecclesiastical and admiralty courts, where they have ever since continued to be held. In the year 1768 a royal charter was obtained, by virtue of which the then members of the society, and their successors, were incorporated, under the name and title of "The College of Doctors of Law exercent in the Ecclesiastical and Admiralty Courts."

"'This college consisted of a president (the Dean of the Arches for the time being) and of those doctors of law who, having regularly taken that degree in either of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and having been admitted advocates in pursuance of the rescript of the Archbishop of Canterbury, shall have been elected fellows of the college in the manner prescribed by the charter. According to the present rules of these courts, a candidate for admission, as an advocate, is required to deliver, into the office of the vicar-general of the province of Canterbury, a certificate of his having taken the degree of Doctor of Laws, signed by the registrar of the university to which he belongs.

"'A petition, praying that in consideration of such qualification the candidate may be admitted an advocate, is then presented to the Archbishop, who issues his *fiat* for the admission of the applicant, directed to his vicar-general, who causes a rescript or commission to be prepared, addressed to the Dean of the Arches, empowering and requiring him to admit the candidate as an advocate of that court. To this a proviso is added, "that the person to be admitted shall not practise for one whole year from the date of his admission," in order that, by attending during the interval, he may acquire a competent knowledge of the forms of proceedings in those courts.

"'On the day appointed for the admission, which is always one of the four regular sessions in each term of the Arches Court, the candidate is presented by the two senior advocates to the Dean, who directed the Archbishop's rescript to be read, and the oaths to be administered.

"'From the college of advocates the Archbishop has always selected the judges of the archiepiscopal courts.'

"The college was abolished in pursuance of 20 & 21 Vict. c. 77, when the Probate and Divorce Courts were established.

"The ecclesiastical courts have latterly, *ex necessitate rei*, admitted barristers to practise in them; but the Archbishop's power to admit advocates remains. The Church Discipline Act, 3 & 4 Vict. c. 86, s. 7, enacted that where a clerk is to be proceeded against before the bishop, articles shall be drawn up against him, to be signed 'by an advocate practising in Doctors' Commons.' But after the dissolution of the College of Advocates the Court held that a barrister could sign instead of an advocate."

CHAPTER XXXI.

"In the midst of the silence of death, I read thus, from a blotted letter:"

Thackeray in his "Sketches and Travels in London" writes: "I think . . . of one who lives amongst us now, and am grateful for the innocent laughter, and the sweet and unsullied pages, which the author of 'David Copperfield' gives to my children." It is one of his children, Mrs. Ritchie, herself an accomplished author, who writes, in her "Chapters from Some Memoirs":

"I can remember, when 'David Copperfield' came out, hearing him" [her father] "saying with emphasis to my grandmother that 'little Em'ly's letter to old Peggotty was a masterpiece.' I wondered to hear him at the time, for that was not at all the part I cared for most, nor indeed could I imagine how little Em'ly was so stupid as to run away from Peggotty's enchanted house-boat. But we each and all enjoyed in turn our share of those thin green books full of delicious things, and how glad we were when they came to our hands at last, after our elders and our governess and our butler had all read them in turn. . . . The Dickens books were as much part of our home as our own father's."

CHAPTER XXXII.

"But presently I discovered underneath it, Miss Mowcher."

The living prototype of Miss Mowcher remonstrated

with Charles Dickens for his caricature of her. Forster, in his "Life," devotes a paragraph to the episode.

"'I have had the queerest adventure this morning,' he wrote (28th of December, 1849) on the eve of his tenth number [of 'Copperfield'] 'the receipt of the enclosed from Miss Mowcher! It is serio-comic, but there is no doubt one is wrong in being tempted to such a use of power.' Thinking a grotesque little oddity among his acquaintance to be safe from recognition, he had done what Smollett did sometimes, but never Fielding, and given way, in the first outburst of fun that had broken out around the fancy, to the temptation of copying too closely peculiarities of figure and face amounting in effect to deformity. He was shocked at discovering the pain he had given, and a copy is before me of the assurances by way of reply which he at once sent to the complainant. That he was grieved and surprised beyond measure. That he had not intended her altogether. That all his characters, being made up out of many people, were composite, and never individual. That the chair (for table) and other matters were undoubtedly from her, but that other traits were not hers at all; and that in Miss Mowcher's 'Ain't I volatile' his friends had quite correctly recognised the favourite utterance of a different person. That he felt nevertheless he had done wrong, and would now do anything to repair it. That he had intended to employ the character in an unpleasant way, but he would, whatever the risk or inconvenience, change it all, so that nothing but an agreeable impression should be left. The reader will remember how this was managed, and that the thirty-second chapter went far to undo what the twenty-second had done."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Micawber's letter to Copperfield.

As Charles Dickens's mother unconsciously posed as a model for Mrs. Nickleby, so did his father suggest the personality of Mr. Micawber, in whom are shadowed forth certain peculiarities of action and speech which appertained to Mr. John Dickens. This is current belief, and so much is asserted by Mr. Forster; but the novelist's eldest son has declared it to be absolutely without foundation.

CHAPTER XLII.

"Dora was afraid of Agnes."

Forster has this curious comment on the two contrasted heroines: "Of the heroines who divide so equally between them the impulsive, easily swayed, not disloyal but sorely distracted affections of the hero, the spoilt foolishness and tenderness of the loving little child-wife, Dora, is more attractive than the too unfailing wisdom and self-sacrificing goodness of the angel-wife, Agnes."

CHAPTER XLIV.

"It was a strange condition of things, the honeymoon being over, and the bridesmaids gone home, when I found myself sitting down in my own small house with Dora."

Richard A. Proctor made an interesting comment on Dora: "Copperfield's first meeting with Dora is Dickens's meeting (when little more than a boy) with a lady by no means so young as Dora is there represented. The courtship is derived from his youthful love for the original of Flora [in 'Little Dorrit']. The married life with Dora, so far as her household ways are concerned, presents Dickens's own experience, so that Dora there represents a third person, and that person his wife. And lastly the death of Dora, and Copperfield's sorrow during the following years, are drawn from the death of his wife's younger sister, Mary, and the sorrow Dickens felt for years thereafter. Yet, though the real Flora furnished only one of these four copies from which the Dora of fiction was combined, we find her forming part of two distinct and very unlike characters, the characteristics of her later years being in part reproduced in Flora—but only in part, for some of Dora's ways were derived from other sources."

CHAPTER LV.

"Tempest."

John Ruskin held the opinion that the storm scene detailed in this chapter was one of the finest instances of

descriptive writing to be found in modern fiction. Dickens himself considered this scene one of the most effective of his public readings. And Forster relates in his exhaustive biography: "It is one of the cants of critical superiority to make supercilious mention of the serious passages in this great writer; but the storm and shipwreck at the close of 'Copperfield,' when the body of the seducer is flung dead upon the shore amid the ruins of the home he has wasted and by the side of the man whose heart he has broken, the one as unconscious of what he had failed to reach as the other of what he has perished to save, is a description that may compare with the most impressive in the language. And to those who, knowing Dickens best, know what realities his books were to him, the expression of his sense of suffering in composing such passages, will have in it not a grain of pretence or affectation. 'I have been tremendously at work these two days' (15th of September, 1850), 'eight hours at a stretch yesterday, and six hours and a half to-day, with the Ham and Steerforth chapter, which has completely knocked me over—utterly defeated me.'"

CHAPTER LX.

"Agnes."

Hans Christian Andersen, in "A Visit to Charles Dickens" (1870), wrote: "It is a great pleasure to find in an author's innermost circle the types of those characters that have delighted one in his works. I had previously heard many people remark that Agnes in 'David Copperfield' was like Dickens's own wife; and although he may not have chosen her deliberately as a model for Agnes, yet still I can think of no one else in his books so near akin to her in all that is graceful and amiable. Mrs. Dickens had a certain soft, womanly repose and reserve about her; but whenever she spoke there came such a light into her large eyes, and such a smile upon her lips, and there was such a charm in the tones of her voice, that henceforth I shall always connect her and Agnes together."

Of the character of Agnes, M. E. Townsend, in "Great Characters of Fiction," said: "It is in the character of Agnes Wickfield that Charles Dickens has touched the

height of his ideal of womanhood; of all his books, 'David Copperfield,' as he has told us himself, was the favourite 'child of his fancy,' and in its heroine we have the full realisation of that which he always conceived to be woman's mission—to lead men higher, to 'point upward,' to strengthen and to guide. In Agnes he has painted for us a perfectly unselfish character living day by day in the lives of others, but accustomed from childhood to a certain self-restraint, which enables her the better to conceal the one attachment of her life under the modest veil of true sisterly affection, to be for years as an adopted sister to the man whom in the secret shrine of her pure heart she worshipped as a lover. No description of Agnes in outward form or feature is given to us in any part of the book; we only see the soul shining through the face with a noble purpose in keeping with her name."

CHAPTER LXIV.

His reputation was at flood-tide at the completion of "David Copperfield." The book was tremendously popular. When engaged upon its close, he wrote to Forster, 21st of October, 1850: "I am within three pages of the shore; and am strangely divided, as usual in such cases, between sorrow and joy. Oh, my dear Forster, if I were to say half of what 'Copperfield' makes me feel to-night, how strangely, even to you, I should be turned inside out! I seem to be sending some part of myself into the Shadowy World."

STUDY OF THE PERSONAL SIDE OF CHARLES DICKENS.

Information for this study may be obtained by reading Marzials's "Life," the Forster biography, and "David Copperfield."

Suggested essays:

"The Childhood of Dickens."

"Dickens as an autobiographical writer."

"Side-lights on Dickens's Character."

"The Most Famous Prose-fiction Autobiography—'David Copperfield.'"

For debates the following topics will afford subjects and suggest others: "Is David Copperfield a Strong Character?" "Resolved, that David Copperfield is Weak and Vacillating." "Is Micawber the Greatest Comic Character in Dickens?" "Can Agnes Wickfield be called Dickens's Ideal of Womanhood?"

Critical and biographical estimate. Suggestions for consideration: To facilitate study, this novel may be divided thus:

Chapters I.–VIII. Early life of David Copperfield.

Chapters IX.–XIV. David and the Murdstones.

Chapters XV.–XIX. David at Canterbury.

Chapters XX.–XXV. The Steerforth and Copperfield friendship.

Chapters XXVI.–XXXIII. Love affair of David and Dora.

Chapters XXXIV.–XL. Struggle with the World.

Chapters XLI.–XLVIII. Married Life.

Chapters XLIX.–LV. Change and Death.

Chapters LVI.–LXIV. Agnes, the "angel-wife."

QUESTIONS ON DAVID COPPERFIELD.

1. Outline the two plots in this novel.
2. What is the weakness of such divided construction?
3. Is the first person narration a better vehicle for Dickens than that of the third?
4. Sift out the autobiographical bits in the childhood of David.
5. Is the character-play fuller and are the incidents more varied than in the previous novels?
6. Draw the respective characters of the two heroines.
7. What rôle would you assign to Little Em'ly?
8. Is her development consistent throughout?
9. Does Little Em'ly deserve the reader's sympathy?
10. What are the suppositions relative to Dickens's drawing of the characters of Dora and Agnes?
11. Is Rosa Dartle a natural delineation?
12. Analyze the character of Mrs. Gummidge.
13. Is her sudden change of disposition in keeping with her supposed nature?
14. Indicate the peculiarities of Miss Mowcher.
15. Was she drawn from life?
16. Find a felicitous phrase "hitting her off."
17. Compare Chapters XXII. and XXXII., in which Miss Mowcher is treated.
18. What are the differences in these chapters, and how accounted for?
19. Who is the most attractive character in the book?
21. What are the inconsistencies in the relationship of David and Steerforth?
21. What passages in the narrative betray the author's fondness for the Peggottys?
22. Which group—the Peggottys or the Micawbers—prove most interesting?

23. Was the immortal Micawber suggested by an actual personage known to Dickens?

24. Does the spying of Micawber strike a false note in his character?

25. How much of Micawber is "real," and how much fictitious?

26. Why did Dickens call Copperfield his "favourite child"?

27. What lesson, if any, does the book inculcate?

28. How do its humour and its pathos balance?

29. Study the storm scene in Chapter LV. and discover why it is accounted one of the finest pieces of descriptive writing in the language.

30. Give a few examples of true and false pathos in the tale.

31. In what respects does the character of David resemble that of Dickens?

32. Single out some striking characterizations in the novel.

33. What are its most humorous scenes?

34. Compare "David Copperfield" with other famous autobiographical novels such as "Pendennis" and "The Mill on the Floss."

35. Note the period of this novel's production.

36. What other interests had Dickens at the time of its composition?

37. Contrast it with the novels that preceded it.

38. What improvement of style in this masterpiece is evident?

39. Select passages respectively showing bombast, lucid simplicity, and metrical rhythm.

REPRINTED PIECES

FROM

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" AND "ALL THE YEAR ROUND."

INTRODUCTION.

In 1858, under the title of "Reprinted Pieces," thirty-one sketches that appeared in Dickens's "Household Words" from 1850 to 1856 were for the first time collected and acknowledged in the eighth volume of the Library Edition of his works (Chapman and Hall), among them being several of the earlier Christmas stories. In 1896 an edition of "Reprinted Pieces" edited by Charles Dickens the Younger was published with several additional papers, some of which were contributed to "All the Year Round." With the exception of serial stories, Christmas Numbers, and the "Uncommercial Traveller" papers, that collection—all of which is included in the present volume—comprised nearly the whole of Dickens's contributions to his two periodicals.

These pieces, ranging in date from 1850 to 1859, are here printed in chronological order, and not haphazard as in the first edition above mentioned. It is, as Charles Dickens the Younger observes, "useful always to be able to compare the later with the earlier work of a great writer —just as it is extremely interesting to compare these 'Reprinted Pieces' with the 'Sketches by Boz.'" Regarding the present collection, it is proper to say that an examination of the record in the "Contributors' Book" of "Household Words" shows that one piece, "A Curious Dance Round a Curious Tree," was the joint work of Dickens and his assistant editor, William H. Wills. Apparently they also collaborated in the writing of "A Plated Article." On the same authority it would appear that "Epsom" was wholly written by Wills, and "Douglas Jerrold" by Wilkie Collins. Since, however, Charles Dickens the Younger has seen fit to include these pieces in the edition for which he is responsible, it has not been considered necessary to omit them here. Bibliographers may still have many questions to settle concerning the extent of Dickens's editing, revision, and rewriting of the articles of his contributors.

REPRINTED PIECES.

A CHILD'S DREAM OF A STAR.

THERE was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright water; they wondered at the goodness and the power of GOD who made the lovely world.

They used to say to one another, sometimes, Supposing all the children upon earth were to die, would the flowers, and the water, and the sky be sorry? They believed they would be sorry. For, said they, the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hill-sides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright specks playing at hide and seek in the sky all night, must surely be the children of the stars; and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more.

There was one clear shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves. It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand in hand at a window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. So they grew to be such friends with it, that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again, to bid it good night; and when they were turning round to sleep, they used to say, "God bless the star!"

But while she was still very young, oh very very young, the sister drooped, and came to be so weak that she could

no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself, and when he saw the star turned round and said to the patient pale face on the bed, "I see the star!" and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

And so the time came all too soon! when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before; and when the star made long rays down towards him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to Heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed, he dreamed about the star; and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. And the star, opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels, who were waiting, turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks, and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company, that lying in his bed he wept for joy.

But, there were many angels who did not go with them, and among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said "No."

She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out his arms, and cried, "O, sister, I am here! Take me!" and then she turned her beaming eyes upon him, and it was night; and the star was shining into the room, making long rays down towards him as he saw it through his tears.

From that hour forth, the child looked out upon the star as on the home he was to go to, when his time should come; and he thought that he did not belong to the earth alone, but to the star too, because of his sister's angel gone before.

There was a baby born to be a brother to the child; and while he was so little that he never yet had spoken word, he stretched his tiny form out on his bed, and died.

Again the child dreamed of the open star, and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and the rows of angels with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Not that one, but another."

As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried, "O, sister, I am here! Take me!" And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his books when an old servant came to him and said:

"Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessing on her darling son!"

Again at night he saw the star, and all that former company. Said his sister's angel to the leader:

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Thy mother!"

A mighty cry of joy went forth through all the star, because the mother was reunited to her two children. And he stretched out his arms and cried, "O, mother, sister, and brother, I am here! Take me!" And they answered him, "Not yet," and the star was shining.

He grew to be a man, whose hair was turning grey, and he was sitting in his chair by the fireside, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears, when the star opened once again.

Said his sister's angel to the leader: "Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Nay, but his maiden daughter."

And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost to him, a celestial creature among those three, and he said, "My daughter's head is on my sister's bosom, and her arm is around my mother's neck, and at her feet there is the baby of old time, and I can bear the parting from her, GOD be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. And one night as he lay

upon his bed, his children standing round, he cried, as he had cried so long ago:

"I see the star!"

They whispered one to another, "He is dying."

And he said, "I am. My age is falling from me like a garment, and I move towards the star as a child. And O, my Father, now I thank thee that it has so often opened, to receive those dear ones who await me!"

And the star was shining; and it shines upon his grave.

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*PERFECT FELICITY.[1]

IN A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW.

I AM the Raven in the Happy Family—and nobody knows what a life of misery I lead!

The dog informs me (he was a puppy about town before he joined us; which was lately) that there is more than one Happy Family on view in London. Mine, I beg to say, may be known by being the Family which contains a splendid Raven.

I want to know why I am to be called upon to accommodate myself to a cat, a mouse, a pigeon, a ringdove, an owl (who is the greatest ass I have ever known), a guinea-pig, a sparrow, and a variety of other creatures with whom I have no opinion in common. Is this national education? Because, if it is, I object to it. Is our cage what they call neutral ground, on which all parties may agree? If so, war to the beak I consider preferable.

What right has any man to require me to look complacently at a cat on a shelf all day? It may be all very well for the owl. My opinion of *him* is that he blinks and stares himself into a state of such dense stupidity that he has no idea what company he is in. I have seen him, with my own eyes, blink himself, for hours, into the conviction that he was alone in a belfry. But *I* am not the owl. It would have been better for me, if I had been born in that station of life.

[1] The papers marked * were not included in the English volume of Reprints.

I am a Raven. I am, by nature, a sort of collector, or antiquarian. If I contributed, in my natural state, to any Periodical, it would be "The Gentleman's Magazine." I have a passion for amassing things that are of no use to me, and burying them. Supposing such a thing—I don't wish it to be known to our proprietor that I put this case, but I say, supposing such a thing—as that I took out one of the Guinea-Pig's eyes; how could I bury it here? The floor of the cage is not an inch thick. To be sure, I could dig through it with my bill (if I dared), but what would be the comfort of dropping a Guinea-Pig's eye into Regent Street?

What *I* want, is privacy. I want to make a collection. I desire to get a little property together. How can I do it here? Mr. Hudson couldn't have done it, under corresponding circumstances.

I want to live by my own abilities, instead of being provided for in this way. I am stuck in a cage with these incongruous companions, and called a Member of the Happy Family; but suppose you took a Queen's Counsel out of Westminster Hall, and settled him board and lodging free, in Utopia, where there would be no excuse for "his quiddits, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks," how do you think *he'd* like it? Not at all. Then why do you expect *me* to like it, and add insult to injury by calling me a "Happy Raven"?

This is what I say: I want to see men do it. I should like to get up a Happy Family of men, and show 'em. I should like to put the Rajah Brooke, the Peace Society, Captain Aaron Smith, several Malay Pirates, Doctor Wiseman, the Reverend Hugh Stowell, Mr. Fox of Oldham, the Board of Health, all the London undertakers, some of the Common (very common *I* think) Council, and all the vested interests in the filth and misery of the poor, into a good-sized cage, and see how they'd get on. I should like to look in at 'em through the bars, after they had undergone the training I have undergone. You wouldn't find Sir Peter Laurie "putting down" Sanitary Reform then, or getting up in *that* vestry, and pledging his word and honour to the non-existence of Saint Paul's Cathedral, I expect! And very happy *he'd* be, wouldn't he, when he couldn't do that sort of thing?

I have no idea of you lords of the creation coming staring

at me in this false position. Why don't you look at home? If you think I'm fond of the dove, you're very much mistaken. If you imagine there is the least good-will between me and the pigeon, you never were more deceived in your lives. If you suppose I wouldn't demolish the whole Family (myself excepted), and the cage too, if I had my own way, you don't know what a real Raven is. But if you *do* know this, why am *I* to be picked out as a curiosity? Why don't you go and stare at the Bishop of Exeter? Ecod, he's one of our breed, if anybody is.

Do you make me lead this public life because I seem to be what I ain't? Why, I don't make half the pretences that are common among you men! You never heard *me* call the sparrow my noble friend. When did *I* ever tell the Guinea-Pig that he was my Christian brother? Name the occasion of my making myself a party to the "sham" (my friend Mr. Carlyle will lend me his favourite word for the occasion) that the cat hadn't really her eye upon the mouse! Can *you* say as much? What about the last Court Ball, the next Debate in the Lords, the last great Ecclesiastical Suit, the next long assembly in the Court Circular? I wonder you are not ashamed to look me in the eye! I am an independent Member—of the Happy Family; and I ought to be let out.

I have only one consolation in my inability to damage anything, and that is that I hope I am instrumental in propagating a delusion as to the character of Ravens. I have a strong impression that the sparrows on our beat are beginning to think they may trust a Raven. Let 'em try! There's an uncle of mine, in a stable-yard down in Yorkshire, who will very soon undeceive any small bird that may favour him with a call.

The dogs too. Ha! ha! As they go by, they look at me and this dog, in quite a friendly way. They never suspect how I should hold on to the tip of his tail, if I consulted my own feelings instead of our proprietor's. It's almost worth being here, to think of some confiding dog who has seen me, going too near a friend of mine who lives at a hackney-coach stand in Oxford Street. You wouldn't stop *his* squeaking in a hurry, if my friend got a chance of him.

It's the same with the children. There's a young gentleman with a hat and feathers, resident in Portland Place,

who brings a penny to our proprietor, twice a week. He wears very short white drawers, and has mottled legs above his socks. He hasn't the least idea what I should do to his legs, if I consulted my own inclinations. He never imagines what I am thinking of, when we look at one another. May he only take those legs, in their present juicy state, close to the cage of my brother-in-law of the Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park!

Call yourselves rational beings, and talk about our being reclaimed? Why, there isn't one of us who wouldn't astonish you, if we could only get out! Let *me* out, and see whether *I* should be meek or not. But this is the way you always go on in—you know you do. Up at Pentonville, the sparrow says—and he ought to know, for he was born in a stack of chimneys in that prison—you are spending I am afraid to say how much every year out of the rates, to keep men in solitude, where they *can't* do any harm (that you know of), and then you sing all sorts of choruses about their being good. So am I what you call good—here. Why? Because I can't help it. Try me outside!

You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, the Magpie says; and I agree with him. If you are determined to pet only those who take things and hide them, why don't you pet the Magpie and me? We are interesting enough for you, ain't we? The Mouse says you are not half so particular about the honest people. He is not a bad authority. He was almost starved when he lived in a workhouse, wasn't he? He didn't get much fatter, I suppose, when he moved to a labourer's cottage? He was thin enough when he came from that place, here—I know that. And what does the Mouse (whose word is his bond) declare? He declares that you don't take half the care you ought of your own young, and don't teach 'em half enough. Why don't you then? You might give our proprietor something to do, I should think, in twisting miserable boys and girls *into* their proper nature, instead of twisting us out of ours. You are a nice set of fellows, certainly, to come and look at Happy Families, as if you had nothing else to look after!

I take the opportunity of our proprietor's pen and ink in the evening, to write this. I shall put it away in a corner—quite sure, as it's intended for the Post Office, of Mr. Rowland Hill's getting hold of it somehow, and sending it to somebody. I understand he can do anything with a let-

ter. Though the Owl says (but I don't believe him), that the present prevalence of measles and chicken-pox among infants in all parts of this country, has been caused by Mr. Rowland Hill. I hope I needn't add that we Ravens are all good scholars, but that we keep our secret (as the Indians believe the Monkeys do, according to a Parrot of my acquaintance) lest our abilities should be imposed upon. As nothing worse than my present degradation as a member of the Happy Family can happen to me, however, I desert the General Freemasons' Lodge of Ravens, and express my disgust in writing.

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*FROM THE RAVEN IN THE HAPPY FAMILY.—I.

I WON'T bear it, and I don't see why I should.

Having begun to commit my grievances to writing, I have made up my mind to go on. You men have a saying, "I may as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb." Very good. *I* may as well get into a false position with our proprietor for a ream of manuscript as a quire. Here goes!

I want to know who Buffon was. I'll take my oath he wasn't a bird. Then what did *he* know about birds—especially about Ravens? He pretends to know all about Ravens. Who told him? Was his authority a Raven? I should think not. There never was a Raven yet, who committed himself, you'll find if you look into the precedents.

There's a schoolmaster in dusty black knee-breeches and stockings, who comes and stares at our establishment every Saturday, and brings a lot of boys with him. He is always bothering the boys about Buffon. That's the way I know what Buffon says. He is a nice man, Buffon; and you're all nice men together, ain't you?

What do you mean by saying that I am inquisitive and impudent, that I go everywhere, that I affront and drive off the dogs, that I play pranks on the poultry, and that I am particularly assiduous in cultivating the good-will of the cook? That's what your friend Buffon says, and you adopt him, it appears. And what do you mean by calling

me "a glutton by nature, and a thief by habit"? Why, the identical boy who was being told this, on the strength of Buffon, as he looked through our wires last Saturday, was almost out of his mind with pudding, and had got another boy's top in his pocket!

I tell you what. I like the idea of you men, writing histories of *us*, and settling what we are, and what we are not, and calling us any names you like best. What colours do you think you would show in, yourselves, if some of us were to take it into our heads to write histories of *you?* I know something of Astley's Theatre, I hope; I was about the stables there, a few years. Ecod! If you heard the observations of the Horses after the performance, you'd have some of the conceit taken out of you!

I don't mean to say that I admire the Cat. I *don't* admire her. On the whole, I have a personal animosity towards her. But, being obliged to lead this life, I condescend to hold communication with her, and I have asked her what *her* opinion is. She lived with an old lady of property before she came here, who had a number of nephews and nieces. She says she could show you up to that extent, after her experience in that situation, that even you would be hardly brazen enough to talk of cats being sly and selfish any more.

I am particularly assiduous in cultivating the good-will of the cook, am I? Oh! I suppose you never do anything of this sort, yourselves? No politician among you was ever particularly assiduous in cultivating the good-will of a minister, eh? No clergyman in cultivating the good-will of a bishop, humph? No fortune-seeker in cultivating the good-will of a patron, hah? You have no toad-eating, no time-serving, no place-hunting, no lacqueyship of gold and silver sticks, or anything of that sort, I suppose? You haven't too many cooks, in short, whom you are all assiduously cultivating, till you spoil the general broth? Not you. You leave that to the Ravens.

Your friend Buffon, and some more of you, are mighty ready, it seems, to give *us* characters. Would you like to hear about your own temper and forbearance? Ask the Dog. About your never overloading or ill-using a willing creature? Ask my brother-in-law's friend, the Camel, up in the Zoological. About your gratitude to, and your provision for, old servants? I wish I could refer you to the

last Horse I dined off (he was very tough), up at a knacker's yard in Battle Bridge. About your mildness, and your abstinence from blows and cudgels? Wait till the Donkey's book comes out!

You are very fond of laughing at the parrot, I observe. Now, I don't care for the parrot. I don't admire the parrot's voice—it wants hoarseness. And I despise the parrot's livery—considering black the only true wear. I would as soon stick my bill into the parrot's breast as look at him. Sooner. But if you come to that, and you laugh at the parrot because the parrot says the same thing over and over again, don't you think you could get up a laugh at yourselves? Did you ever know a Cabinet Minister say of a flagrant job or great abuse, perfectly notorious to the whole country, that he had never heard a word of it himself, but could assure the honourable gentleman that every inquiry should be made? Did you ever hear a Justice remark, of any extreme example of ignorance, that it was a most extraordinary case, and he couldn't have believed in the possibility of such a case—when there had been, all through his life, ten thousand such within sight of his chimney-pots? Did you ever hear, among yourselves, anything approaching to a parrot repetition of the words, Constitution, Country, Public Service, Self-Government, Centralisation, Un-English, Capital, Balance of Power, Vested Interests, Corn Rights of Labour, Wages, or so forth? *Did* you ever? No! Of course, you never!

But to come back to that fellow Buffon. He finds us Ravens to be most extraordinary creatures. We have properties so remarkable, that you'd hardly believe it. "A piece of money, a teaspoon, or a ring," he says, "are always tempting baits to our avarice. These we will slily seize upon; and, if not watched, carry to our favourite hole." How odd!

Did you ever hear of a place called California? *I* have. I understand there are a number of animals over there, from all parts of the world, turning up the ground with their bills, grubbing under the water, sickening, moulting, living in want and fear, starving, dying, tumbling over on their backs, murdering one another, and all for what? Pieces of money that they want to carry to their favourite holes. Ravens every one of 'em! Not a man among 'em, bless you!

Did you ever hear of Railway Scrip? *I* have. We made a pretty exhibition of ourselves about that, we feathered creatures! Lord, how we went on about that Railway Scrip! How we fell down, to a bird, from the Eagle to the Sparrow, before a scarecrow, and worshipped it for the love of the bits of rag and paper fluttering from its dirty pockets! If it hadn't tumbled down in its rottenness, we should have clapped a title on it within ten years, I'll be sworn—Go along with you, and your Buffon, and don't talk to me!

"The Raven don't confine himself to petty depredations on the pantry or the larder"—here you are with your Buffon again—"but he soars at more magnificent plunder, that he can neither exhibit nor enjoy." This must be very strange to you men—more than it is to the Cat who lived with that old lady, though!

Now, I am not going to stand this. You shall not have it all your own way. I am resolved that I won't have Ravens written about by men, without having men written about by Ravens—at all events by one Raven, and that's me. I shall put down my opinions about you. As leisure and opportunity serve, I shall collect a natural history of you. You are a good deal given to talk about *your* missions. That's my mission. How do you like it?

I am open to contributions from any animal except one of your set; bird, beast, or fish, may assist me in my mission, if he will. I have mentioned it to the Cat, intimated it to the Mouse, and proposed it to the Dog. The Owl shakes his head when I confide it to him, and says he doubts. He always did shake his head, and doubt. Whenever he brings himself before the public, he never does anything except shake his head and doubt. I should have thought he had got himself into a sufficient mess by doing that, when he roosted for a long time in the Court of Chancery. But he can't leave off. He's always at it.

Talking of missions, here's our Proprietor's Wife with a mission now! She has found out that she ought to go and vote at elections; ought to be competent to sit in Parliament, ought to be able to enter the learned professions—the army and navy too, I believe. She has made the discovery that she has no business to be the comfort of our Proprietor's life, and to have the hold upon him of not being mixed up in all the janglings and wranglings of men, but

is quite ill-used in being the solace of his home, and wants to go out Speechifying. That's our Proprietor's Wife's new mission. Why, you never heard the Dove go on in that ridiculous way. She knows her true strength better.

You are mighty proud about your language; but it seems to me that you don't deserve to have words, if you can't make a better use of 'em. You know you are always fighting about 'em. Do you never mean to leave that off, and come to things a little? I thought you had high authority for *not* tearing each other's eyes out, about words. You respect it, don't you?

I declare I am stunned with words, on my perch in the Happy Family. I used to think the cry of a Peacock bad enough, when I was on sale in a menagerie, but I had rather live in the midst of twenty peacocks, than one Gorham and a Privy Council. In the midst of your wordy squabbling you don't think of the lookers-on. But if you heard what *I* hear in my public thoroughfare, you'd stop a little of that noise and leave the great bulk of the people something to believe in peace. You are overdoing it, I assure you.

I don't wonder at the Parrot picking words up and occupying herself with them. She has nothing else to do. There are no destitute parrots, no uneducated parrots, no foreign parrots in a contagious state of distraction, no parrots in danger of pestilence, no festering heaps of miserable parrots, no parrots crying to be sent away beyond the sea for dear life. But among you! . . .

Well! I repeat, I am not going to stand it. Tame submission to injustice is unworthy of a Raven. I croak the croak of revolt, and call upon the Happy Family to rally round me. You men have had it all your own way for a long time. *Now*, you shall hear a sentiment or two about yourselves.

I find my last communication gone from the corner where I hid it. I rather suspect the magpie, but he says, "Upon his honour." If Mr. Rowland Hill has got it, he will do me justice—more justice than you have done him lately, or I am mistaken in my man.

THE BEGGING LETTER-WRITER.

THE amount of money he annually diverts from wholesome and useful purposes in the United Kingdom, would be a set-off against the Window Tax. He is one of the most shameless frauds and impositions of this time. In his idleness, his mendacity, and the immeasurable harm he does to the deserving,—dirtying the stream of true benevolence, and muddling the brains of foolish justices, with inability to distinguish between the base coin of distress, and the true currency we have always among us,—he is more worthy of Norfolk Island than three-fourths of the worst characters who are sent there. Under any rational system, he would have been sent there long ago.

I, the writer of this paper, have been, for some time, a chosen receiver of Begging Letters. For fourteen years, my house has been made as regular a Receiving House for such communications as any one of the great branch Post-Offices is for general correspondence. I ought to know something of the Begging-Letter Writer. He has besieged my door at all hours of the day and night; he has fought my servant; he has lain in ambush for me, going out and coming in; he has followed me out of town into the country; he has appeared at provincial hotels, where I have been staying for only a few hours; he has written to me from immense distances, when I have been out of England. He has fallen sick; he has died and been buried; he has come to life again, and again departed from this transitory scene: he has been his own son, his own mother, his own baby, his idiot brother, his uncle, his aunt, his aged grandfather. He has wanted a greatcoat, to go to India in; a pound to set him up in life for ever; a pair of boots to take him to the coast of China; a hat to get him into a permanent situation under Government. He has frequently been exactly seven-and-sixpence short of independence. He has had such openings at Liverpool—posts of great trust and confidence in merchants' houses, which nothing but seven-and-sixpence was wanting to him to secure—that I wonder he is not Mayor of that flourishing town at the present moment.

The natural phenomena of which he has been the victim, are of a most astounding nature. He has had two children who have never grown up; who have never had anything to cover them at night; who have been continually driving him mad, by asking in vain for food; who have never come out of fevers and measles (which, I suppose, has accounted for his fuming his letters with tobacco smoke, as a disinfectant); who have never changed in the least degree through fourteen long revolving years. As to his wife, what that suffering woman has undergone, nobody knows. She has always been in an interesting situation through the same long period, and has never been confined yet. His devotion to her has been unceasing. He has never cared for himself; *he* could have perished—he would rather, in short—but was it not his Christian duty as a man, a husband, and a father, to write begging letters when he looked at her? (He has usually remarked that he would call in the evening for an answer to this question.)

He has been the sport of the strangest misfortunes. What his brother has done to him would have broken anybody else's heart. His brother went into business with him, and ran away with the money; his brother got him to be security for an immense sum and left him to pay it; his brother would have given him employment to the tune of hundreds a year, if he would have consented to write letters on a Sunday; his brother enunciated principles incompatible with his religious views, and he could not (in consequence) permit his brother to provide for him. His landlord has never shown a spark of human feeling. When he put in that execution I don't know, but he has never taken it out. The broker's man has grown grey in possession. They will have to bury him some day.

He has been attached to every conceivable pursuit. He has been in the army, in the navy, in the church, in the law; connected with the press, the fine arts, public institutions, every description and grade of business. He has been brought up as a gentleman; he has been at every college in Oxford and Cambridge; he can quote Latin in his letters (but generally misspells some minor English word); he can tell you what Shakespeare says about begging, better than you know it. It is to be observed, that in the midst of his afflictions he always reads the newspapers;

and rounds off his appeal with some allusion, that may be supposed to be in my way, to the popular subject of the hour.

His life presents a series of inconsistencies. Sometimes he has never written such a letter before. He blushes with shame. That is the first time; that shall be the last. Don't answer it, and let it be understood that, then, he will kill himself quietly. Sometimes (and more frequently) he *has* written a few such letters. Then he encloses the answers, with an intimation that they are of inestimable value to him, and a request that they may be carefully returned. He is fond of enclosing something—verses, letters, pawnbrokers' duplicates, anything to necessitate an answer. He is very severe upon "the pampered minion of fortune," who refused him the half-sovereign referred to in the enclosure number two—but he knows me better.

He writes in a variety of styles; sometimes in low spirits; sometimes quite jocosely. When he is in low spirits he writes down-hill and repeats words—these little indications being expressive of the perturbation of his mind. When he is more vivacious, he is frank with me; he is quite the agreeable rattle. I know what human nature is, —who better? Well! He had a little money once, and he ran through it—as many men have done before him. He finds his old friends turn away from him now—many men have done that before him too! Shall he tell me why he writes to me? Because he has no kind of claim upon me. He puts it on that ground plainly; and begs to ask for the loan (as I know human nature) of two sovereigns, to be repaid next Tuesday six weeks, before twelve at noon.

Sometimes, when he is sure that I have found him out, and that there is no chance of money, he writes to inform me that I have got rid of him at last. He has enlisted into the Company's service, and is off directly—but he wants a cheese. He is informed by the serjeant that it is essential to his prospects in the regiment that he should take out a single Gloucester cheese, weighing from twelve to fifteen pounds. Eight or nine shillings would buy it. He does not ask for money, after what has passed; but if he calls at nine to-morrow morning may he hope to find a cheese? And is there anything he can do to show his gratitude in Bengal?

Once he wrote me rather a special letter, proposing re-

lief in kind. He had got into a little trouble by leaving parcels of mud done up in brown paper, at people's houses, on pretence of being a Railway-Porter, in which character he received carriage money. This sportive fancy he expiated in the House of Correction. Not long after his release, and on a Sunday morning, he called with a letter (having first dusted himself all over), in which he gave me to understand that, being resolved to earn an honest livelihood, he had been travelling about the country with a cart of crockery. That he had been doing pretty well until the day before, when his horse had dropped down dead near Chatham, in Kent. That this had reduced him to the unpleasant necessity of getting into the shafts himself, and drawing the cart of crockery to London –a somewhat exhausting pull of thirty miles. That he did not venture to ask again for money; but that if I would have the goodness *to leave him out a donkey*, he would call for the animal before breakfast!

At another time my friend (I am describing actual experiences) introduced himself as a literary gentleman in the last extremity of distress. He had had a play accepted at a certain Theatre—which was really open; its representation was delayed by the indisposition of a leading actor—who was really ill; and he and his were in a state of absolute starvation. If he made his necessities known to the Manager of the Theatre, he put it to me to say what kind of treatment he might expect? Well! we got over that difficulty to our mutual satisfaction. A little while afterwards he was in some other strait. I think Mrs. Southcote, his wife, was in extremity—and we adjusted that point too. A little while afterwards he had taken a new house, and was going headlong to ruin for want of a water-butt. I had my misgivings about the water-butt, and did not reply to that epistle. But a little while afterwards, I had reason to feel penitent for my neglect. He wrote me a few broken-hearted lines, informing me that the dear partner of his sorrows died in his arms last night at nine o'clock!

I despatched a trusty messenger to comfort the bereaved mourner and his poor children; but the messenger went so soon, that the play was not ready to be played out; my friend was not at home, and his wife was in a most delightful state of health. He was taken up by the Mendicity Society (informally it afterwards appeared), and I presented

myself at a London Police-Office with my testimony against him. The Magistrate was wonderfully struck by his educational acquirements, deeply impressed by the excellence of his letters, exceedingly sorry to see a man of his attainments there, complimented him highly on his powers of composition, and was quite charmed to have the agreeable duty of discharging him. A collection was made for the "poor fellow," as he was called in the reports, and I left the court with a comfortable sense of being universally regarded as a sort of monster. Next day comes to me a friend of mine, the governor of a large prison. "Why did you ever go to the Police-Office against that man," says he, "without coming to me first? I know all about him and his frauds. He lodged in the house of one of my warders, at the very time when he first wrote to you; and then he was eating spring-lamb at eighteen-pence a pound, and early asparagus at I don't know how much a bundle!" On that very same day, and in that very same hour, my injured gentleman wrote a solemn address to me, demanding to know what compensation I proposed to make him for his having passed the night in a "loathsome dungeon." And next morning an Irish gentleman, a member of the same fraternity, who had read the case, and was very well persuaded I should be chary of going to that Police-Office again, positively refused to leave my door for less than a sovereign, and resolved to besiege me into compliance, literally "sat down" before it for ten mortal hours. The garrison being well provisioned, I remained within the walls; and he raised the siege at midnight with a prodigious alarum on the bell.

The Begging-Letter Writer often has an extensive circle of acquaintance. Whole pages of the "Court Guide" are ready to be references for him. Noblemen and gentlemen write to say there never was such a man for probity and virtue. They have known him time out of mind, and there is nothing they wouldn't do for him. Somehow, they don't give him that one pound ten he stands in need of; but perhaps it is not enough—they want to do more, and his modesty will not allow it. It is to be remarked of his trade that it is a very fascinating one. He never leaves it; and those who are near to him become smitten with a love of it, too, and sooner or later set up for themselves. He employs a messenger—man, woman, or child. That messenger is

certain ultimately to become an independent Begging-Letter Writer. His sons and daughters succeed to his calling, and write begging-letters when he is no more. He throws off the infection of begging-letter writing, like the contagion of disease. What Sydney Smith so happily called "the dangerous luxury of dishonesty" is more tempting, and more catching, it would seem, in this instance than in any other.

He always belongs to a Corresponding-Society of Begging-Letter Writers. Any one who will, may ascertain this fact. Give money to-day in recognition of a begging-letter, —no matter how unlike a common begging-letter,—and for the next fortnight you will have a rush of such communications. Steadily refuse to give; and the begging-letters become Angels' visits, until the Society is from some cause or other in a dull way of business, and may as well try you as anybody else. It is of little use inquiring into the Begging-Letter Writer's circumstances. He may be sometimes accidentally found out, as in the case already mentioned (though that was not the first inquiry made); but apparent misery is always a part of his trade, and real misery very often is, in the intervals of spring lamb and early asparagus. It is naturally an incident of his dissipated and dishonest life.

That the calling is a successful one, and that large sums of money are gained by it, must be evident to anybody who reads the Police Reports of such cases. But, prosecutions are of rare occurrence, relatively to the extent to which the trade is carried on. The cause of this is to be found (as no one knows better than the Begging-Letter Writer, for it is a part of his speculation) in the aversion people feel to exhibit themselves as having been imposed upon, or as having weakly gratified their consciences with a lazy, flimsy substitute for the noblest of all virtues. There is a man at large, at the moment when this paper is preparing for the press (on the 29th of April, 1850), and never once taken up yet, who, within these twelvemonths, has been probably the most audacious and the most successful swindler that even this trade has ever known. There has been something singularly base in this fellow's proceedings; it has been his business to write to all sorts and conditions of people, in the names of persons of high reputation and unblemishd honour, professing to be in distress—the general admira-

tion and respect for whom has ensured a ready and generous reply.

Now, in the hope that the results of the real experience of a real person may do something more to induce reflection on this subject than any abstract treatise—and with a personal knowledge of the extent to which the Begging-Letter Trade has been carried on for some time, and has been for some time constantly increasing—the writer of this paper entreats the attention of his reader to a few concluding words. His experience is a type of the experience of many; some on a smaller, some on an infinitely larger scale. All may judge of the soundness or unsoundness of his conclusions from it.

Long doubtful of the efficacy of such assistance in any case whatever, and able to recall but one, within his whole individual knowledge, in which he had the least after-reason to suppose that any good was done by it, he was led, last autumn, into some serious considerations. The begging-letters flying about by every post, made it perfectly manifest that a set of lazy vagabonds were interposed between the general desire to do something to relieve the sickness and misery under which the poor were suffering, and the suffering poor themselves. That many who sought to do some little to repair the social wrongs, inflicted in the way of preventible sickness and death upon the poor, was strengthening those wrongs, however innocently, by wasting money on pestilent knaves cumbering society. That imagination,—soberly following one of these knaves into his life of punishment in jail, and comparing it with the life of one of these poor in a cholera-stricken alley, or one of the children of one of these poor, soothed in its dying hour by the late lamented Mr. Drouet,—contemplated a grim farce, impossible to be presented very much longer before God or man. That the crowning miracle of all the miracles summed up in the New Testament, after the miracle of the blind seeing, and the lame walking, and the restoration of the dead to life, was the miracle that the poor had the Gospel preached to them. That while the poor were unnaturally and unnecessarily cut off by the thousand, in the prematurity of their age, or in the rottenness of their youth—for of flower or blossom such youth has none—the Gospel was NOT preached to them, saving in hollow and unmeaning voices. That of all wrongs, this

was the first mighty wrong the Pestilence warned us to set right. And that no Post-Office Order to any amount, given to a Begging-Letter Writer for the quieting of an uneasy breast, would be presentable on the Last Great Day as anything towards it.

The poor never write these letters. Nothing could be more unlike their habits. The writers are public robbers; and we who support them are parties to their depredations. They trade upon every circumstance within their knowledge that affects us, public or private, joyful or sorrowful; they pervert the lessons of our lives; they change what ought to be our strength and virtue into weakness, and encouragement of vice. There is a plain remedy, and it is in our own hands. We must resolve, at any sacrifice of feeling, to be deaf to such appeals, and crush the trade.

There are degrees in murder. Life must be held sacred among us in more ways than one—sacred, not merely from the murderous weapon, or the subtle poison, or the cruel blow, but sacred from preventible diseases, distortions, and pains. That is the first great end we have to set against this miserable imposition. Physical life respected, moral life comes next. What will not content a Begging-Letter Writer for a week, would educate a score of children for a year. Let us give all we can; let us give more than ever. Let us do all we can; let us do more than ever. But let us give, and do, with a high purpose; not to endow the scum of the earth, to its own greater corruption, with the offals of our duty.

A WALK IN A WORKHOUSE.

On a certain Sunday, I formed one of the congregation assembled in the chapel of a large metropolitan Workhouse. With the exception of the clergyman and clerk, and a very few officials, there were none but paupers present. The children sat in the galleries; the women in the body of the chapel, and in one of the side aisles; the men in the remaining aisle. The service was decorously performed, though the sermon might have been much better adapted to the comprehension and to the circumstances of the hearers. The usual supplications were offered, with

more than the usual significancy in such a place, for the fatherless children and widows, for all sick persons and young children, for all that were desolate and oppressed, for the comforting and helping of the weak-hearted, for the raising-up of them that had fallen; for all that were in danger, necessity, and tribulation. The prayers of the congregation were desired 'for several persons in the various wards dangerously ill;" and others who were recovering returned their thanks to Heaven.

Among this congregation, were some evil-looking young women, and beetle-browed young men; but not many—perhaps that kind of characters kept away. Generally, the faces (those of the children excepted) were depressed and subdued, and wanted colour. Aged people were there, in every variety. Mumbling, blear-eyed, spectacled, stupid, deaf, lame; vacantly winking in the gleams of sun that now and then crept in through the open doors, from the paved yard; shading their listening ears, or blinking eyes, with their withered hands; poring over their books, leering at nothing, going to sleep, crouching and drooping in corners. There were weird old women, all skeleton within, all bonnet and cloak without, continually wiping their eyes with dirty dusters of pocket-handkerchiefs; and there were ugly old crones, both male and female, with a ghastly kind of contentment upon them which was not at all comforting to see. Upon the whole, it was the dragon, Pauperism, in a very weak and impotent condition; toothless, fangless, drawing his breath heavily enough, and hardly worth chaining up.

When the service was ever, I walked with the humane and conscientious gentleman whose duty it was to take that walk, that Sunday morning, through the little world of poverty enclosed within the workhouse walls. It was inhabited by a population of some fifteen hundred or two thousand paupers, ranging from the infant newly born or not yet come into the pauper world, to the old man dying on his bed.

In a room opening from a squalid yard, where a number of listless women were lounging to and fro, trying to get warm in the ineffectual sunshine of the tardy May morning—in the "Itch Ward," not to compromise the truth—a woman such as HOGARTH has often drawn, was hurriedly getting on her gown before a dusty fire. She was the

nurse, or wardswoman, of that insalubrious department—herself a pauper—flabby, raw-boned, untidy—unpromising and coarse of aspect as need be. But, on being spoken to about the patients whom she had in charge, she turned round, with her shabby gown half on, half off, and fell a crying with all her might. Not for show, not querulously, not in any mawkish sentiment, but in the deep grief and affliction of her heart; turning away her dishevelled head: sobbing most bitterly, wringing her hands, and letting fall abundance of great tears, that choked her utterance. What was the matter with the nurse of the itch-ward? Oh, "the dropped child" was dead! Oh, the child that was found in the street, and she had brought up ever since, had died an hour ago, and see where the little creature lay, beneath this cloth! The dear, the pretty dear!

The dropped child seemed too small and poor a thing for Death to be in earnest with, but Death had taken it; and already its diminutive form was neatly washed, composed, and stretched as if in sleep upon a box. I thought I heard a voice from Heaven saying, It shall be well for thee, O nurse of the itch-ward, when some less gentle pauper does those offices to thy cold form, that such as the dropped child are the angels who behold my Father's face!

In another room, were several ugly old women crouching, witch-like, round a hearth, and chattering and nodding, after the manner of the monkeys. "All well here? And enough to eat?" A general chattering and chuckling; at last an answer from a volunteer. "Oh yes gentleman! Bless you gentleman! Lord bless the Parish of St. So-and-So! It feed the hungry, sir, and give drink to the thirsty, and it warm them which is cold, so it do, and good luck to the parish of St. So-and-So, and thankee gentleman!" Elsewhere, a party of pauper nurses were at dinner. "How do *you* get on?" "Oh pretty well, sir! We works hard, and we lives hard—like the sodgers!"

In another room, a kind of purgatory or place of transition, six or eight noisy madwomen were gathered together, under the superintendence of one sane attendant. Among them was a girl of two or three-and-twenty, very prettily dressed, of most respectable appearance, and good manners, who had been brought in from the house where she had lived as domestic servant (having, I suppose, no friends), on account of being subject to epileptic fits, and requiring

to be removed under the influence of a very bad one. She was by no means of the same stuff, or the same breeding, or the same experience, or in the same state of mind, as those by whom she was surrounded; and she pathetically complained that the daily association and the nightly noise made her worse, and was driving her mad—which was perfectly evident. The case was noted for inquiry and redress, but she said she had already been there for some weeks.

If this girl had stolen her mistress's watch, I do not hesitate to say she would have been infinitely better off. We have come to this absurd, this dangerous, this monstrous pass, that the dishonest felon is, in respect of cleanliness, order, diet, and accommodation, better provided for, and taken care of, than the honest pauper.

And this conveys no special imputation on the workhouse of the parish of St. So-and-So, where, on the contrary, I saw many things to commend. It was very agreeable, recollecting that most infamous and atrocious enormity committed at Tooting—an enormity which, a hundred years hence, will still be vividly remembered in the byeways of English life, and which has done more to engender a gloomy discontent and suspicion among many thousands of the people than all the Chartist leaders could have done in all their lives—to find the pauper children in this workhouse looking robust and well, and apparently the objects of very great care. In the Infant School—a large, light, airy room at the top of the building—the little creatures, being at dinner, and eating their potatoes heartily, were not cowed by the presence of strange visitors, but stretched out their small hands to be shaken, with a very pleasant confidence. And it was comfortable to see two mangey pauper rocking-horses rampant in a corner. In the girls' school, where the dinner was also in progress, everything bore a cheerful and healthy aspect. The meal was over, in the boys' school, by the time of our arrival there, and the room was not yet quite rearranged; but the boys were roaming unrestrained about a large and airy yard, as any other schoolboys might have done. Some of them had been drawing large ships upon the schoolroom wall; and if they had a mast with shrouds and stays set up for practice (as they have in the Middlesex House of Correction), it would be so much the better. At present, if a boy should feel a

strong impulse upon him to learn the art of going aloft, he could only gratify it, I presume, as the men and women paupers gratify their aspirations after better board and lodging, by smashing as many workhouse windows as possible, and being promoted to prison.

In one place, the Newgate of the Workhouse, a company of boys and youths were locked up in a yard alone; their day-room being a kind of kennel where the casual poor used formerly to be littered down at night. Divers of them had been there some long time. "Are they never going away?" was the natural inquiry. "Most of them are crippled, in some form or other," said the Wardsman, "and not fit for anything." They slunk about, like dispirited wolves or hyænas; and made a pounce at their food when it was served out, much as those animals do. The big-headed idiot shuffling his feet along the pavement, in the sunlight outside, was a more agreeable object everyway.

Groves of babies in arms; groves of mothers and other sick women in bed; groves of lunatics; jungles of men in stone-paved down-stairs day-rooms, waiting for their dinners; longer and longer groves of old people, in up-stairs Infirmary wards, wearing out life, God knows how—this was the scenery through which the walk lay, for two hours. In some of these latter chambers, there were pictures stuck against the wall, and a neat display of crockery and pewter on a kind of sideboard; now and then it was a treat to see a plant or two; in almost every ward there was a cat.

In all of these Long Walks of aged and infirm, some old people were bedridden, and had been for a long time; some were sitting on their beds half-naked; some dying in their beds; some out of bed, and sitting at a table near the fire. A sullen or lethargic indifference to what was asked, a blunted sensibility to everything but warmth and food, a moody absence of complaint as being of no use, a dogged silence and resentful desire to be left alone again, I thought were generally apparent. On our walking into the midst of one of these dreary perspectives of old men, nearly the following little dialogue took place, the nurse not being immediately at hand:

"All well here?"

No answer An old man in a Scotch cap sitting among others on a form at the table, eating out of a tin porringer, pushes back his cap a little to look at us, claps it down on

his forehead again with the palm of his hand, and goes on eating.

"All well here?" (repeated.)

No answer. Another old man sitting on his bed, paralytically peeling a boiled potato, lifts his head and stares.

"Enough to eat?"

No answer. Another old man, in bed, turns himself and coughs.

"How are *you* to-day?" To the last old man.

The old man says nothing; but another old man, a tall old man of very good address, speaking with perfect correctness, comes forward from somewhere, and volunteers an answer. The reply almost always proceeds from a volunteer, and not from the person looked at or spoken to.

"We are very old, sir," in a mild, distinct voice. "We can't expect to be well, most of us."

"Are you comfortable?"

"I have no complaint to make, sir." With a half shake of his head, a half shrug of his shoulders, and a kind of apologetic smile.

"Enough to eat?"

"Why, sir, I have but a poor appetite," with the same air as before; "and yet I get through my allowance very easily."

"But," showing a porringer with a Sunday dinner in it; "here is a portion of mutton, and three potatoes. You can't starve on that?"

"Oh dear no, sir," with the same apologetic air. "Not starve."

"What do you want?"

"We have very little bread, sir. It's an exceedingly small quantity of bread."

The nurse, who is now rubbing her hands at the questioner's elbow, interferes with, "It ain't much raly, sir. You see they've only six ounces a day, and when they've took their breakfast, there *can* only be a little left for night, sir."

Another old man, hitherto invisible, rises out of his bedclothes, as out of a grave, and looks on.

"You have tea at night?" The questioner is still addressing the well-spoken old man.

"Yes, sir, we have tea at night"

"And you save what bread you can from the morning, to eat with it?"

"Yes, sir—if we can save any."

"And you want more to eat with it?"

"Yes, sir." With a very anxious face.

The questioner, in the kindness of his heart, appears a little discomposed, and changes the subject.

"What has become of the old man who used to lie in that bed in the corner?"

The nurse don't remember what old man is referred to. There has been such a many old men. The well-spoken old man is doubtful. The spectral old man who has come to life in bed, says, "Billy Stevens." Another old man who has previously had his head in the fire-place, pipes out,

"Charley Walters."

Something like a feeble interest is awakened. I suppose Charley Walters had conversation in him.

"He's dead," says the piping old man.

Another old man, with one eye screwed up, hastily displaces the piping old man, and says:

"Yes! Charley Walters died in that bed, and—and—"

"Billy Stevens," persists the spectral old man.

"No, no! and Johnny Rogers died in that bed, and—and—they're both on 'em dead—and Sam'l Bowyer;" this seems very extraordinary to him; "he went out!"

With this he subsides, and all the old men (having had quite enough of it) subside, and the spectral old man goes into his grave again, and takes the shade of Billy Stevens with him.

As we turn to go out at the door, another previously invisible old man, a hoarse old man in a flannel gown, is standing there, as if he had just come up through the floor.

"I beg your pardon, sir, could I take the liberty of saying a word?"

"Yes; what is it?"

"I am greatly better in my health, sir; but what I want, to get me quite round," with his hand on his throat, "is a little fresh air, sir. It has always done my complaint so much good, sir. The regular leave for going out, comes round so seldom, that if the gentlemen, next Friday, would give me leave to go out walking, now and then—for only an hour or so, sir!—"

Who could wonder, looking through those weary vistas of bed and infirmity, that it should do him good to meet

with some other scenes, and assure himself that there was something else on earth? Who could help wondering why the old men lived on as they did; what grasp they had on life; what crumbs of interest or occupation they could pick up from its bare board; whether Charley Walters had ever described to them the days when he kept company with some old pauper woman in the bud, or Billy Stevens ever told them of the time when he was a dweller in the far-off foreign land called Home!

The morsel of burnt child, lying in another room, so patiently, in bed, wrapped in lint, and looking steadfastly at us with his bright quiet eyes when we spoke to him kindly, looked as if the knowledge of these things, and of all the tender things there are to think about, might have been in his mind—as if he thought, with us, that there was a fellow-feeling in the pauper nurses which appeared to make them more kind to their charges than the race of common nurses in the hospitals—as if he mused upon the Future of some older children lying around him in the same place, and thought it best, perhaps, all things considered, that he should die—as if he knew, without fear, of those many coffins, made and unmade, piled up in the store below—and of his unknown friend, "the dropped child," calm upon the box-lid covered with a cloth. But there was something wistful and appealing, too, in his tiny face, as if, in the midst of all the hard necessities and incongruities he pondered on, he pleaded, in behalf of the helpless and the aged poor, for a little more liberty—and a little more bread.

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*FROM THE RAVEN IN THE HAPPY FAMILY.—II

HALLOA!

You *won't* let me begin that Natural History of you, eh? You *will* always be doing something or other, to take off my attention? Now, you have begun to argue with the Undertakers, have you? What next!

Ugh! you are a nice set of fellows to be discussing, at this time of day, whether you shall countenance that humbug any longer. "Performing" funerals, indeed! I have

heard of performing dogs and cats, performing goats and monkeys, performing ponies, white mice, and canary birds; but, performing drunkards at so much a day, guzzling over your dead, and throwing half of you into debt for a twelvemonth, beats all I ever heard of. Ha, ha!

The other day there was a person "went and died" (as our Proprietor's wife says) close to our establishment. Upon my beak I thought I should have fallen off my perch, you made me laugh so, at the funeral!

Oh my crop and feathers, what a scene it was! *I* never saw the Owl so charmed. It was just the thing for him.

First of all, two dressed-up fellows came—trying to look sober, but they couldn't do it—and stuck themselves outside the door. There they stood, for hours, with a couple of crutches covered over with drapery; cutting their jokes on the company as they went in, and breathing such strong rum and water into our establishment over the way, that the Guinea-Pig (who has a poor little head) was drunk in ten minutes. You are so proud of your humanity. Ha, ha! As if a pair of respectable crows wouldn't have done it much better?

By-and-bye there came a hearse and four, and then two carriages and four; and on the tops of 'em, and on all the horses' heads, were plumes of feathers, hired at so much per plume; and everything, horses and all, was covered over with black velvet, till you couldn't see it. Because there were not feathers enough yet, there was a fellow in the procession carrying a board of 'em on his head, like Italian images; and there were about five-and-twenty or thirty other fellows (all hot and red in the face with eating and drinking) dressed up in scarves and hat-bands, and carrying—shut-up fishing rods, I believe—who went draggling through the mud, in a manner that I thought would be the death of me; while the "Black Job-master"—that's what he calls himself—who had let the coaches and horses to a furnishing undertaker, who had let 'em to a haberdasher, who had let 'em to a carpenter, who had let 'em to the parish-clerk, who had let 'em to the sexton, who had let 'em to the plumber painter and glazier who had got the funeral to do, looked out of the public-house window at the corner, with his pipe in his mouth, and said—for I heard him—"that was the sort of turn-out to do a gen-teel party credit." That! As if any two-and-

sixpenny masquerade, tumbled into a vat of blacking, wouldn't be quite as solemn, and immeasurably cheaper!

Do you think I don't know you? You're mistaken if you think so. But perhaps you do. Well! Shall I tell you what I know? Can you bear it? Here it is then. The Black Jobmaster is right. The root of all this, is the gen-teel party.

You don't mean to deny it, I hope? You don't mean to tell me that this nonsensical mockery isn't owing to your gentility. Don't I know a Raven in a Cathedral Tower, who has often heard your service for the Dead? Don't I know that you almost begin it with the words, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out"? Don't I know that in a monstrous satire on those words, you carry your hired velvets, and feathers, and scarves, and all the rest of it to the edge of the grave, and get plundered (and serve you right!) in every article, because you WILL be gen-teel parties to the last?

Eh? Think a little! Here's the plumber painter and glazier come to take the funeral order which he is going to give to the sexton, who is going to give it to the clerk, who is going to give it to the carpenter, who is going to give it to the haberdasher, who is going to give it to the furnishing undertaker, who is going to divide it with the Black Jobmaster. "Hearse and four, Sir?" says he. "No, a pair will be sufficient." "I beg your pardon, Sir, but when we buried Mr. Grundy at number twenty, there was four on 'em, Sir; I think it right to mention it." "Well, perhaps there had better be four." "Thank you, Sir Two coaches and four, Sir, shall we say?" "No. Coaches and pair." "You'll excuse my mentioning it, Sir, but pairs to the coaches, and four to the hearse, would have a singular appearance to the neighbours. When we put four to anything, we always carry four right through." Well! say four!" "Thank you, Sir. Feathers of course?" "No, No feathers. They're absurd." "Very good, Sir. *No* feathers?" "No." "*Very* good, Sir. We *can* do fours without feathers, Sir, but it's what we never do. When we buried Mr. Grundy, there was feathers, and—I only throw it out, Sir—Mrs. Grundy might think it strange." "Very well! Feathers!" "Thank you, Sir,"—and so on.

Is it and so on, or not, through the whole black job of jobs, because of Mrs. Grundy and the gen-teel party?

I suppose you've thought about this? I suppose you've reflected on what you're doing, and what you've done? When you read about those poisonings for the burial society money, you consider how it is that burial societies ever came to be at all? You perfectly understand—you who are not the poor, and ought to set 'em an example—that, besides making the whole thing costly, you've confused their minds about this burying, and have taught 'em to confound expense and show, with respect and affection. You know all you've got to answer for, you gen-teel parties? I'm glad of it.

I believe it's only the monkeys who are servile imitators, is it? You reflect! To be sure you do. So does Mrs. Grundy—and she casts reflections—don't she?

What animals are those who scratch shallow holes in the ground in crowded places, scarcely hide their dead in 'em, and become unnaturally infected by their dead, and die by thousands? Vultures, I suppose. I think you call the Vulture an obscene bird? I don't consider him agreeable, but I never caught him misconducting himself in that way.

My honourable friend, the dog—I call him my honourable friend in your Parliamentary sense, because I hate him—turns round three times before he goes to sleep. I ask him why? He says he don't know; but he always does it. Do *you* know how you ever came to have that board of feathers carried on a fellow's head? Come. You're a boastful race. Show yourselves superior to the dog, and tell me!

Now, I don't love many people; but I do love the undertakers. I except them from the censure I pass upon you in general. They know you so well, that I look upon 'em as a sort of Raven. They are so certain of your being gen-teel parties, that they stick at nothing. They are sure they've got the upper hand of you. Our proprietor was reading the paper, only last night, and there was an advertisement in it from a sensitive and libelled undertaker, to wit, that the allegation "that funerals were unnecessarily expensive, was an insult to his professional brethren." Ha, ha! Why he knows he has you on the hip. It's nothing to him that their being unnecessarily expensive is a fact within the experience of all of you as glaring as the sun when there's not a cloud. He is certain that when

you want a funeral "performed," he has only to be down upon you with Mrs. Grundy, to do what he likes with you —and then he'll go home and laugh like a Hyæna.

I declare (supposing I wasn't detained against my will by our proprietor) that, if I had any arms, I'd take the undertakers to 'em! There's another, in the same paper, who says they're libelled, in the accusation of having disgracefully disturbed the meeting in favour of what you call your General Interment Bill. Our establishment was in the Strand, that night. There was no crowd of undertakers' men there, with circulars in their pockets, calling on 'em to come in coloured clothes to make an uproar; it wasn't undertakers' men who got in with forged orders to yell and screech; it wasn't undertakers' men who made a brutal charge at the platform, and overturned the ladies like a troop of horses. Of course not. *I* know all about it.

But—and lay this well to heart, you Lords of the Creation, as you call yourselves!—it *is* these undertakers' men to whom, in the last trying, bitter grief of life, you confide the loved and honoured forms of your sisters, mothers, daughters, wives. It *is* to these delicate gentry, and to their solemn remarks and decorous behaviour that you entrust the sacred ashes of all that has been the purest to you, and the dearest to you, in this world. Don't improve the breed! Don't change the custom! Be true to my opinion of you, and to Mrs. Grundy!

I nail the black flag of the Black Jobmaster to our cage —figuratively speaking—and I stand up for the gen-teel parties. So (but from different motives) does the Owl. You've got a chance, by means of that bill I've mentioned —by the bye, I call my own a General Interment Bill, for it buries everything it gets hold of—to alter the whole system; to avail yourselves of the results of all improved European experience; to separate death from life; to surround it with everything that is sacred and solemn and to dissever it from everything that is shocking and sordid. You won't read the bill? You won't dream of helping it? You won't think of looking at the evidence on which it's founded— Will you? No. That's right!

Gen-teel parties step forward, if you please, to the rescue of the Black Jobmaster! The rats are with you. I am informed that they have unanimously passed a resolution that the closing of the London churchyards will be an in-

sult to their professional brethren, and will oblige 'em "to fight for it." The Parrots are with you. The Owl is with you. The Raven is with you. No General Interments. Carrion for ever!

Ha, ha! Halloa!

THE GHOST OF ART.

I AM a bachelor, residing in rather a dreary set of chambers in the Temple. They are situated in a square court of high houses, which would be a complete well, but for the want of water and the absence of a bucket. I live at the top of the house, among the tiles and sparrows. Like the little man in the nursery story, I live by myself, and all the bread and cheese I get—which is not much—I put upon a shelf. I need scarcely add, perhaps, that I am in love, and that the father of my charming Julia objects to our union.

I mention these little particulars as I might deliver a letter of introduction. The reader is now acquainted with me, and perhaps will condescend to listen to my narrative.

I am naturally of a dreamy turn of mind; and my abundant leisure—for I am called to the bar—coupled with much lonely listening to the twittering of sparrows, and the pattering of rain, has encouraged that disposition. In my "top set" I hear the wind howl, on a winter night, when the man on the ground floor believes it is perfectly still weather. The dim lamps with which our Honourable Society (supposed to be as yet unconscious of the new discovery called Gas) make the horrors of the staircase visible, deepen the gloom which generally settles on my soul when I go home at night.

I am in the Law, but not of it. I can't exactly make out what it means. I sit in Westminster Hall sometimes (in character) from ten to four; and when I go out of Court, I don't know whether I am standing on my wig or my boots.

It appears to me (I mention this in confidence) as if there were too much talk and too much law—as if some grains of truth were started overboard into a tempestuous sea of chaff.

All this may make me mystical. Still, I am confident that what I am going to describe myself as having seen and heard, I actually did see and hear.

It is necessary that I should observe that I have a great delight in pictures. I am no painter myself, but I have studied pictures and written about them. I have seen all the most famous pictures in the world; my education and reading have been sufficiently general to possess me beforehand with a knowledge of most of the subjects to which a Painter is likely to have recourse; and, although I might be in some doubt as to the rightful fashion of the scabbard of King Lear's sword, for instance, I think I should know King Lear tolerably well, if I happened to meet with him.

I go to all the Modern Exhibitions every season, and of course I revere the Royal Academy. I stand by its forty Academical articles almost as firmly as I stand by the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. I am convinced that in neither case could there be, by any rightful possibility, one article more or less.

It is now exactly three years—three years ago, this very month—since I went from Westminster to the Temple, one Thursday afternoon, in a cheap steamboat. The sky was black, when I imprudently walked on board. It began to thunder and lighten immediately afterwards, and the rain poured down in torrents. The deck seeming to smoke with the wet, I went below; but so many passengers were there, smoking too, that I came up again, and buttoning my pea-coat, and standing in the shadow of the paddle-box, stood as upright as I could, and made the best of it.

It was at this moment that I first beheld the terrible Being, who is the subject of my present recollections.

Standing against the funnel, apparently with the intention of drying himself by the heat as fast as he got wet, was a shabby man in threadbare black, and with his hands in his pockets, who fascinated me from the memorable instant when I caught his eye.

Where had I caught that eye before? Who was he? Why did I connect him, all at once, with the Vicar of Wakefield, Alfred the Great, Gil Blas, Charles the Second, Joseph and his Brethren, the Fairy Queen, Tom Jones, the Decameron of Boccacio, Tam O'Shanter, the Marriage of the Doge of Venice with the Adriatic, and the Great

Plague of London? Why, when he bent one leg, and placed one hand upon the back of the seat near him, did my mind associate him wildly with the words, "Number one hundred and forty-two, Portrait of a gentleman?" Could it be that I was going mad?

I looked at him again, and now I could have taken my affidavit that he belonged to the Vicar of Wakefield's family. Whether he was the Vicar, or Moses, or Mr. Burchell, or the Squire, or a conglomeration of all four, I knew not; but I was impelled to seize him by the throat, and charge him with being, in some fell way, connected with the Primrose blood. He looked up at the rain, and then—oh Heaven!—he became Saint John. He folded his arms, resigning himself to the weather, and I was frantically inclined to address him as the Spectator, and firmly demand to know what he had done with Sir Roger de Coverley.

The frightful suspicion that I was becoming deranged, returned upon me with redoubled force. Meantime, this awful stranger, inexplicably linked to my distress, stood drying himself at the funnel; and ever, as the steam rose from his clothes, diffusing a mist around him, I saw through the ghostly medium all the people I have mentioned, and a score more, sacred and profane.

I am conscious of a dreadful inclination that stole upon me, as it thundered and lightened, to grapple with this man, or demon, and plunge him over the side. But, I constained myself—I know not how—to speak to him, and in a pause of the storm, I crossed the deck, and said:

"What are you?"

He replied, hoarsely, "A Model."

"A what?" said I.

"A Model," he replied. "I sets to the profession for a bob a-hour." (All through this narrative I give his own words, which are indelibly imprinted on my memory.)

The relief which this disclosure gave me, the exquisite delight of the restoration of my confidence in my own sanity, I cannot describe. I should have fallen on his neck, but for the consciousness of being observed by the man at the wheel.

"You then," said I, shaking him so warmly by the hand, that I wrung the rain out of his coat-cuff, "are the gentleman whom I have so frequently contemplated, in

connection with a high-backed chair with a red cushion, and a table with twisted legs."

"I am that Model," he rejoined moodily, "and I wish I was anything else."

"Say not so," I returned. "I have seen you in the society of many beautiful young women;" as in truth I had, and always (I now remember) in the act of making the most of his legs.

"No doubt," said he. "And you've seen me along with warses of flowers, and any number of table-kivers, and antique cabinets, and warious gammon."

"Sir?" said I.

"And warious gammon," he repeated, in a louder voice. "You might have seen me in armour, too, if you had looked sharp. Blessed if I ha'n't stood in half the suits of armour as ever came out of Pratt's shop: and sat, for weeks together, a eating nothing, out of half the gold and silver dishes as has ever been lent for the purpose out of Storrses, and Mortimerses, or Garrardses, and Davenportseseses."

Excited, as it appeared, by a sense of injury, I thought he would never have found an end for the last word. But, at length it rolled sullenly away with the thunder.

"Pardon me," said I, "you are a well-favoured, well-made man, and yet—forgive me—I find, on examining my mind, that I associate you with—that my recollection indistinctly makes you, in short—excuse me—a kind of powerful monster."

"It would be a wonder if it didn't," he said. "Do you know what my points are?"

"No," said I.

"My throat and my legs," said he. "When I don't set for a head, I mostly sets for a throat and a pair of legs. Now, granted you was a painter, and was to work at my throat for a week together, I suppose you'd see a lot of lumps and bumps there, that would never be there at all, if you looked at me, complete, instead of only my throat. Wouldn't you?"

"Probably," said I, surveying him.

"Why, it stands to reason," said the Model. "Work another week at my legs, and it'll be the same thing. You'll make 'em out as knotty and as knobby, at last, as if they was the trunks of two old trees. Then, take and stick my legs and throat on to another man's body, and you'll

make a reg'lar monster. And that's the way the public gets their reg'lar monsters, every first Monday in May, when the Royal Academy Exhibition opens."

"You are a critic," said I, with an air of deference.

"I'm in an uncommon ill humour, if that's it," rejoined the Model, with great indignation. "As if it warn't bad enough for a bob a-hour, for a man to be mixing himself up with that there jolly old furniter that one 'ud think the public know'd the wery nails in by this time—or to be putting on greasy old 'ats and cloaks, and playing tambourines in the Bay o' Naples, with Wesuvius a smokin' according to pattern in the background, and the wines a bearing wonderful in the middle distance—or to be unpolitely kicking up his legs among a lot o' gals, with no reason whatever in his mind, but to show 'em—as if this warn't bad enough, I'm to go and be thrown out of employment too!"

"Surely no!" said I.

"Surely yes," said the indignant Model. "BUT I'LL GROW ONE."

The gloomy and threatening manner in which he muttered the last words, can never be effaced from my remembrance. My blood ran cold.

I asked of myself, what was it that this desperate Being was resolved to grow. My breast made no response.

I ventured to implore him to explain his meaning. With a scornful laugh, he uttered this dark prophecy:

"I'LL GROW ONE. AND, MARK MY WORDS, IT SHALL HAUNT YOU!"

We parted in the storm, after I had forced half-a-crown on his acceptance, with a trembling hand. I conclude that something supernatural happened to the steamboat, as it bore his reeking figure down the river; but it never got into the papers.

Two years elapsed, during which I followed my profession without any vicissitudes; never holding so much as a motion, of course. At the expiration of that period, I found myself making my way home to the Temple, one night, in precisely such another storm of thunder and lightning as that by which I had been overtaken on board the steamboat—except that this storm, bursting over the town at midnight, was rendered much more awful by the darkness and the hour.

As I turned into my court, I really thought a thunderbolt would fall, and plough the pavement up. Every brick and stone in the place seemed to have an echo of its own for the thunder. The waterspouts were overcharged, and the rain came tearing down from the house-tops as if they had been mountain-tops.

Mrs. Parkins, my laundress—wife of Parkins the porter, then newly dead of a dropsy—had particular instructions to place a bedroom candle and a match under the staircase lamp on my landing, in order that I might light my candle there, whenever I came home. Mrs. Parkins invariably disregarding all instructions, they were never there. Thus it happened that on this occasion I groped my way into my sitting-room to find the candle, and came out to light it.

What were my emotions when, underneath the staircase lamp, shining with wet as if he had never been dry since our last meeting, stood the mysterious Being whom I had encountered on the steam-boat in a thunder-storm, two years before! His prediction rushed upon my mind, and I turned faint.

"I said I'd do it," he observed, in a hollow voice, "and I have done it. May I come in?"

"Misguided creature, what have you done?" I returned.

"I'll let you know," was his reply, "if you'll let me in."

Could it be murder that he had done? And had he been so successful that he wanted to do it again, at my expense?

I hesitated.

"May I come in?" said he.

I inclined my head, with as much presence of mind as I could command, and he followed me into my chambers. There, I saw that the lower part of his face was tied up, in what is commonly called a Belcher handkerchief. He slowly removed this bandage, and exposed to view a long dark beard, curling over his upper lip, twisting about the corners of his mouth, and hanging down upon his breast.

"What is this?" I exclaimed involuntarily, "and what have you become?"

"I am the Ghost of Art!" said he.

The effect of these words, slowly uttered in the thunder-storm at midnight, was appalling in the last degree. More dead than alive, I surveyed him in silence.

"The German taste came up," said he, "and threw me out of bread. I am ready for the taste now."

He made his beard a little jagged with his hands, folded his arms, and said,

"Severity!"

I shuddered. It was so severe.

He made his beard flowing on his breast, and, leaning both hands on the staff of a carpet-broom which Mrs. Parkins had left among my books, said:

"Benevolence."

I stood transfixed. The change of sentiment was entirely in the beard. The man might have left his face alone, or had no face. The beard did everything.

He lay down, on his back, on my table, and with that action of his head threw up his beard at the chin.

"That's death!" said he.

He got off my table and, looking up at the ceiling, cocked his beard a little awry; at the same time making it stick out before him.

"Adoration, or a vow of vengeance," he observed.

He turned his profile to me, making his upper lip very bulgy with the upper part of his beard.

"Romantic character," said he.

He looked sideways out of his beard, as if it were an ivy-bush. "Jealousy," said he. He gave it an ingenious twist in the air, and informed me that he was carousing. He made it shaggy with his fingers—and it was Despair; lank—and it was avarice: tossed it all kinds of ways—and it was rage. The beard did everything.

"I am the Ghost of Art," said he. "Two bob a-day now, and more when it's longer! Hair's the true expression. There is no other. I SAID I'D GROW IT, AND I'VE GROWN IT, AND IT SHALL HAUNT YOU!"

He may have tumbled down-stairs in the dark, but he never walked down or ran down. I looked over the banisters, and I was alone with the thunder.

Need I add more of my terrific fate? It HAS haunted me ever since. It glares upon me from the walls of the Royal Academy, (except when MACLISE subdues it to his genius), it fills my soul with terror at the British Institution, it lures young artists on to their destruction. Go where I will, the Ghost of Art, eternally working the passions in hair, and expressing everything by beard, pursues me. The prediction is accomplished, and the victim has no rest.

THE DETECTIVE POLICE.

We are not by any means devout believers in the old Bow Street Police. To say the truth, we think there was a vast amount of humbug about those worthies. Apart from many of them being men of very indifferent character, and far too much in the habit of consorting with thieves and the like, they never lost a public occasion of jobbing and trading in mystery and making the most of themselves. Continually puffed besides by incompetent magistrates anxious to conceal their own deficiencies, and hand-in-glove with the penny-a-liners of that time, they became a sort of superstition. Although as a Preventive Police they were utterly ineffective, and as a Detective Police were very loose and uncertain in their operations, they remain with some people a superstition to the present day.

On the other hand, the Detective Force organised since the establishment of the existing Police, is so well chosen and trained, proceeds so systematically and quietly, does its business in such a workmanlike manner, and is always so calmly and steadily engaged in the service of the public, that the public really do not know enough of it, to know a tithe of its usefulness. Impressed with this conviction, and interested in the men themselves, we represented to the authorities at Scotland Yard, that we should be glad, if there were no official objection, to have some talk with the Detectives. A most obliging and ready permission being given, a certain evening was appointed with a certain Inspector for a social conference between ourselves and the Detectives, at The Household Words Office in Wellington Street, Strand, London. In consequence of which appointment the party "came off," which we are about to describe. And we beg to repeat that, avoiding such topics as it might for obvious reasons be injurious to the public, or disagreeable to respectable individuals, to touch upon in print, our description is as exact as we can make it.

The reader will have the goodness to imagine the Sanctum Sanctorum of Household Words. Anything that best suits the reader's fancy, will best represent that magnificent chamber. We merely stipulate for a round table in

the middle, with some glasses and cigars arranged upon it; and the editorial sofa elegantly hemmed in between that stately piece of furniture and the wall.

It is a sultry evening at dusk. The stones of Wellington Street are hot and gritty, and the watermen and hackney-coachmen at the Theatre opposite, are much flushed and aggravated. Carriages are constantly setting down the people who have come to Fairy-Land; and there is a mighty shouting and bellowing every now and then, deafening us for the moment, through the open windows.

Just at dusk, Inspectors Wield and Stalker are announced; but we do not undertake to warrant the orthography of any of the names here mentioned. Inspector Wield presents Inspector Stalker. Inspector Wield is a middle-aged man of a portly presence, with a large, moist, knowing eye, a husky voice, and a habit of emphasising his conversation by the aid of a corpulent forefinger, which is constantly in juxtaposition with his eyes or nose. Inspector Stalker is a shrewd, hard-headed Scotchman—in appearance not at all unlike a very acute, thoroughly-trained schoolmaster, from the Normal Establishment at Glasgow. Inspector Wield one might have known, perhaps, for what he is—Inspector Stalker, never.

The ceremonies of reception over, Inspectors Wield and Stalker observe that they have brought some sergeants with them. The sergeants are presented—five in number, Sergeant Dornton, Sergeant Witchem, Sergeant Mith, Sergeant Fendall, and Sergeant Straw. We have the whole Detective Force from Scotland Yard, with one exception. They sit down in a semi-circle (the two Inspectors at the two ends) at a little distance from the round table, facing the editorial sofa. Every man of them, in a glance, immediately takes an inventory of the furniture and an accurate sketch of the editorial presence. The Editor feels that any gentleman in company could take him up, if need should be, without the smallest hesitation, twenty years hence.

The whole party are in plain clothes. Sergeant Dornton about fifty years of age, with a ruddy face and a high sunburnt forehead, has the air of one who has been a Sergeant in the army—he might have sat to Wilkie for the Soldier in the Reading of the Will. He is famous for steadily pursuing the inductive process, and, from small beginnings,

working on from clue to clue until he bags his man. Sergeant Witchem, shorter and thicker-set, and marked with the small-pox, has something of a reserved and thoughtful air, as if he were engaged in deep arithmetical calculations. He is renowned for his acquaintance with the swell mob. Sergeant Mith, a smooth-faced man with a fresh bright complexion, and a strange air of simplicity, is a dab at housebreakers. Sergeant Fendall, a light-haired, well spoken, polite person, is a prodigious hand at pursuing private inquiries of a delicate nature. Straw, a little wiry Sergeant of meek demeanour and strong sense, would knock at a door and ask a series of questions in any mild character you choose to prescribe to him, from a charity-boy upwards, and seem as innocent as an infant. They are, one and all, respectable-looking men; of perfectly good deportment and unusual intelligence; with nothing lounging or slinking in their manners; with an air of keen observation and quick perception when addressed; and generally presenting in their faces, traces more or less marked of habitually leading lives of strong mental excitement. They have all good eyes; and they all can, and they all do, look full at whomsoever they speak to.

We light the cigars, and hand round the glasses (which are very temperately used indeed), and the conversation begins by a modest amateur reference on the Editorial part to the swell mob. Inspector Wield immediately removes his cigar from his lips, waves his right hand, and says, "Regarding the swell mob, sir, I can't do better than call upon Sergeant Witchem. Because the reason why? I'll tell you. Sergeant Witchem is better acquainted with the swell mob than any officer in London."

Our heart leaping up when we beheld this rainbow in the sky, we turn to Sergeant Witchem, who very concisely, and in well-chosen language, goes into the subject forthwith. Meantime, the whole of his brother officers are closely interested in attending to what he says, and observing its effect. Presently they begin to strike in, one or two together, when an opportunity offers, and the conversation becomes general. But these brother officers only come in to the assistance of each other—not to the contradiction—and a more amicable brotherhood there could not be. From the swell mob, we diverge to the kindred topics of cracksmen, fences, public-house dances, area-sneaks, designing

young people who go out "gonophing," and other "schools." It is observable throughout these revelations, that Inspector Stalker, the Scotchman, is always exact and statistical, and that when any question of figures arises, everybody as by one consent pauses, and looks to him.

When we have exhausted the various schools of Art—during which discussion the whole body have remained profoundly attentive, except when some unusual noise at the Theatre over the way has induced some gentleman to glance inquiringly towards the window in that direction, behind his next neighbour's back—we burrow for information on such points as the following. Whether there really are any highway robberies in London, or whether some circumstances not convenient to be mentioned by the aggrieved party, usually precede the robberies complained of, under that head, which quite change their character? Certainly the latter, almost always. Whether in the case of robberies in houses, where servants are necessarily exposed to doubt, innocence under suspicion ever becomes so like guilt in appearance, that a good officer need be cautious how he judges it? Undoubtedly. Nothing is so common or deceptive as such appearances at first. Whether in a place of public amusement, a thief knows an officer, and an officer knows a thief—supposing them, beforehand, strangers to each other—because each recognises in the other, under all disguise, an inattention to what is going on, and a purpose that is not the purpose of being entertained? Yes. That's the way exactly. Whether it is reasonable or ridiculous to trust to the alleged experiences of thieves as narrated by themselves, in prisons, or penitentiaries, or anywhere? In general, nothing more absurd. Lying is their habit and their trade; and they would rather lie—even if they hadn't an interest in it, and didn't want to make themselves agreeable—than tell the truth.

From these topics, we glide into a review of the most celebrated and horrible of the great crimes that have been committed within the last fifteen or twenty years. The men engaged in the discovery of almost all of them, and in the pursuit or apprehension of the murderers, are here, down to the very last instance. One of our guests gave chase to and boarded the emigrant ship, in which the murderess last hanged in London was supposed to have embarked. We learn from him that his errand was not an-

nounced to the passengers, who may have no idea of it to this hour. That he went below, with the captain, lamp in hand—it being dark, and the whole steerage abed and seasick—and engaged the Mrs. Manning who *was* on board, in a conversation about her luggage, until she was, with no small pains, induced to raise her head, and turn her face towards the light. Satisfied that she was not the object of his search, he quietly re-embarked in the Government steamer alongside, and steamed home again with the intelligence.

When we have exhausted these subjects, too, which occupy a considerable time in the discussion, two or three leave their chairs, whisper Sergeant Witchem, and resume their seats. Sergeant Witchem leaning forward a little, and placing a hand on each of his legs, then modestly speaks as follows:

"My brother-officers wish me to relate a little account of my taking Tally-ho Thompson. A man oughtn't to tell what he has done himself; but still, as nobody was with me, and, consequently, as nobody but myself can tell it, I'll do it in the best way I can, if it should meet your approval."

We assure Sergeant Witchem that he will oblige us very much, and we all compose ourselves to listen with great interest and attention.

"Tally-ho Thompson," says Sergeant Witchem, after merely wetting his lips with his brandy-and-water, "Tally-ho Thompson was a famous horse-stealer, couper, and nagsman. Thompson, in conjunction with a pal that occasionally worked with him, gammoned a countryman out of a good round sum of money, under pretence of getting him a situation—the regular old dodge—and was afterwards in the 'Hue and Cry' for a horse—a horse that he stole, down in Hertfordshire. I had to look after Thompson, and I applied myself, of course, in the first instance, to discovering where he was. Now, Thompson's wife lived, along with a little daughter, at Chelsea. Knowing that Thompson was somewhere in the country, I watched the house—especially at post-time in the morning—thinking Thompson was pretty likely to write to her. Sure enough, one morning the postman comes up, and delivers a letter at Mrs. Thompson's door. Little girl opens the door, and takes it in. We're not always sure of postmen, though the people at the post-offices are always very obliging. A post-

man may help us, or he may not,—just as it happens. However, I go across the road, and I say to the postman, after he has left the letter, 'Good morning! how are you?' 'How are *you?*' says he. 'You've just delivered a letter for Mrs. Thompson.' 'Yes, I have.' 'You didn't happen to remark what the postmark was, perhaps?' 'No,' says he, 'I didn't.' 'Come,' says I, 'I'll be plain with you. I'm in a small way of business, and I have given Thompson credit, and I can't afford to lose what he owes me. I know he's got money, and I know he's in the country, and if you could tell me what the post-mark was, I should be very much obliged to you, and you'd do a service to a tradesman in a small way of business that can't afford a loss.' 'Well,' he said, 'I do assure you that I did not observe what the post-mark was; all I know is, that there was money in the letter—I should say a sovereign.' This was enough for me, because of course I knew that Thompson having sent his wife money, it was probable she'd write to Thompson, by return of post, to acknowledge the receipt. So I said, 'Thankee' to the postman, and I kept on the watch. In the afternoon I saw the little girl come out. Of course I followed her. She went into a stationer's shop, and I needn't say to you that I looked in at the window. She bought some writing-paper and envelopes, and a pen. I think to myself, 'That'll do!'—watch her home again—and don't go away, you may be sure, knowing that Mrs. Thompson was writing her letter to Tally-ho, and that the letter would be posted presently. In about an hour or so, out came the little girl again, with the letter in her hand. I went up, and said something to the child, whatever it might have been; but I couldn't see the direction of the letter, because she held it with the seal upwards. However, I observed that on the back of the letter there was what we call a kiss—a drop of wax by the side of the seal—and again, you understand, that was enough for me. I saw her post the letter, waited till she was gone, then went into the shop, and asked to see the Master. When he came out, I told him, 'Now, I'm an Officer in the Detective Force; there's a letter with a kiss been posted here just now, for a man that I'm in search of; and what I have to ask of you, is, that you will let me look at the direction of that letter.' He was very civil—took a lot of letters from the box in the window—shook 'em out

on the counter with the faces downwards—and there among 'm was the identical letter with the kiss. It was directed, Mr. Thomas Pigeon, Post Office, B——, to be left till called for. Down I went to B—— (a hundred and twenty miles or so) that night. Early next morning I went to the Post Office; saw the gentleman in charge of that department; told him who I was; and that my object was to see, and track, the party that should come for the letter for Mr. Thomas Pigeon. He was very polite, and said, 'You shall have every assistance we can give you; you can wait inside the office; and we'll take care to let you know when anybody comes for the letter.' Well, I waited there three days, and began to think that nobody ever *would* come. At last the clerk whispered to me, 'Here! Detective! Somebody's come for the letter!' 'Keep him a minute,' said I, and I ran round to the outside of the office. There I saw a young chap with the appearance of an Ostler, holding a horse by the bridle—stretching the bridle across the pavement, while he waited at the Post Office Window for the letter. I began to pat the horse, and that; and I said to the boy, 'Why, this is Mr. Jones's Mare!' 'No. It an't.' 'No?' said I. 'She's very like Mr. Jones's Mare!' 'She an't Mr. Jones's Mare, anyhow,' says he. 'It's Mr. So and So's, of the Warwick Arms.' And up he jumped, and off he went—letter and all. I got a cab, followed on the box, and was so quick after him that I came into the stable-yard of the Warwick Arms, by one gate, just as he came in by another. I went into the bar, where there was a young woman serving, and called for a glass of brandy-and-water. He came in directly, and handed her the letter. She casually looked at it, without saying anything, and stuck it up behind the glass over the chimney-piece. What was to be done next?

"I turned it over in my mind while I drank my brandy-and-water (looking pretty sharp at the letter the while) but I couldn't see my way out of it at all. I tried to get lodgings in the house, but there had been a horse-fair, or something of that sort, and it was full. I was obliged to put up somewhere else, but I came backwards and forwards to the bar for a couple of days, and there was the letter always behind the glass. At last I thought I'd write a letter to Mr. Pigeon myself, and see what that would do. So I wrote one, and posted it, but I purposely addressed

it, Mr. John Pigeon, instead of Mr. Thomas Pigeon, to see what *that* would do. In the morning (a very wet morning it was) I watched the postman down the street, and cut into the bar, just before he reached the Warwick Arms. In he came presently with my letter. 'Is there a Mr. John Pigeon staying here?' 'No!—stop a bit though,' says the barmaid; and she took down the letter behind the glass. 'No,' says she, 'it's Thomas, and *he* is not staying here. Would you do me a favour, and post this for me, as it is so wet?' The postman said Yes; she folded it in another envelope, directed it, and gave it him. He put it in his hat, and away he went.

"I had no difficulty in finding out the direction of that letter. It was addressed Mr. Thomas Pigeon, Post Office, R——, Northamptonshire, to be left till called for. Off I started directly for R——; I said the same at the Post Office there, as I had said at B——; and again I waited three days before anybody came. At last another chap on horseback came. 'Any letters for Mr. Thomas Pigeon?' 'Where do you come from?' 'New Inn, near R——.' He got the letter, and away *he* went at a canter.

"I made my inquiries about the New Inn, near R——, and hearing it was a solitary sort of house, a little in the horse line, about a couple of miles from the station, I thought I'd go and have a look at it. I found it what it had been described, and sauntered in, to look about me. The landlady was in the bar, and I was trying to get into conversation with her; asked her how business was, and spoke about the wet weather, and so on; when I saw, through an open door, three men sitting by the fire in a sort of parlour, or kitchen; and one of those men, according to the description I had of him, was Tally-ho Thompson!

"I went and sat down among 'em, and tried to make things agreeable; but they were very shy—wouldn't talk at all—looked at me, and at one another, in a way quite the reverse of sociable. I reckoned 'em up, and finding that they were all three bigger men than me, and considering that their looks were ugly—that it was a lonely place—railroad station two miles off—and night coming on—thought I couldn't do better than have a drop of brandy-and-water to keep my courage up. So I called for my brandy-and-water; and as I was sitting drinking it by the fire, Thompson got up and went out.

"Now the difficulty of it was, that I wasn't sure it *was* Thompson, because I had never set eyes on him before; and what I had wanted was to be quite certain of him. However, there was nothing for it now, but to follow, and put a bold face upon it. I found him talking, outside in the yard, with the landlady. It turned out afterwards that he was wanted by a Northampton officer for something else, and that, knowing that officer to be pock-marked (as I am myself), he mistook me for him. As I have observed, I found him talking to the landlady, outside. I put my hand upon his shoulder—this way—and said, 'Tally-ho Thompson, it's no use. I know you. I'm an officer from London, and I take you into custody for felony!' 'That be d—d!' says Tally-ho Thompson.

"We went back into the house, and the two friends began to cut up rough, and their looks didn't please me at all, I assure you. 'Let the man go. What are you going to do with him?' 'I'll tell you what I'm going to do with him. I'm going to take him to London to-night, as sure as I'm alive. I'm not alone here, whatever you may think. You mind your own business, and keep yourselves to yourselves. It'll be better for you, for I know you both very well.' *I'd* never seen or heard of 'em in all my life, but my bouncing cowed 'em a bit, and they kept off, while Thompson was making ready to go. I thought to myself, however, that they might be coming after me on the dark road, to rescue Thompson; so I said to the landlady, 'What men have you got in the house, Missis?' 'We haven't got no men here,' she says, sulkily. 'You have got an ostler, I suppose?' 'Yes, we've got an ostler.' 'Let me see him.' Presently he came, and a shaggy-headed young fellow he was. 'Now attend to me, young man,' says I; 'I'm a Detective Officer from London. This man's name is Thompson. I have taken him into custody for felony. I am going to take him to the railroad station. I call upon you in the Queen's name to assist me; and mind you, my friend, you'll get yourself into more trouble than you know of, if you don't!' You never saw a person open his eyes so wide. 'Now, Thompson, come along!' says I. But when I took out the handcuffs, Thompson cries, 'No! None of that! I won't stand *them!* I'll go along with you quiet, but I won't bear none of that!' 'Tally-ho Thompson,' I said, 'I'm willing to behave as a

man to you, if you are willing to behave as a man to me. Give me your word that you'll come peaceably along, and I don't want to handcuff you.' 'I will,' says Thompson, 'but I'll have a glass of brandy first.' 'I don't care if I've another,' said I. 'We'll have two more, Missis,' said the friends, 'and con-found you, Constable, you'll give your man a drop, won't you?' I was agreeable to that, so we had it all round, and then my man and I took Tally-ho Thompson safe to the railroad, and I carried him to London that night. He was afterwards acquitted, on account of a defect in the evidence; and I understand he always praises me up to the skies, and says I'm one of the best of men."

This story coming to a termination amidst general applause, Inspector Wield, after a little grave smoking, fixes his eye on his host, and thus delivers himself:

"It wasn't a bad plant that of mine, on Fikey, the man accused of forging the Sou' Western Railway debentures —it was only t'other day—because the reason why? I'll tell you.

"I had information that Fikey and his brother kept a factory over yonder there,"—indicating any region on the Surrey side of the river—"where he bought second-hand carriages; so after I'd tried in vain to get hold of him by other means, I wrote him a letter in an assumed name, saying that I'd got a horse and shay to dispose of, and would drive down next day that he might view the lot, and make an offer—very reasonable it was, I said—a reg'lar bargain. Straw and me then went off to a friend of mine that's in the livery and job business, and hired a turn-out for the day, a precious smart turn-out it was—quite a slap-up thing! Down we drove, accordingly, with a friend (who's not in the Force himself); and leaving my friend in the shay near a public-house, to take care of the horse, we went to the factory, which was some little way off. In the factory, there was a number of strong fellows at work, and after reckoning 'em up, it was clear to me that it wouldn't do to try it on there. They were too many for us. We must get our man out of doors. 'Mr. Fikey at home?' 'No, he ain't.' 'Expected home soon?' 'Why, no, not soon.' 'Ah! Is his brother here?' '*I*'m his brother.' 'Oh! well, this is an ill-conwenience, this is. I wrote him a letter yesterday, saying I'd got a little turn-out to dis-

pose of, and I've took the trouble to bring the turn-out down a-purpose, and now he ain't in the way.' 'No, he ain't in the way. You couldn't make it convenient to call again, could you?' 'Why, no, I couldn't. I want to sell; that's the fact; and I can't put it off. Could you find him anywheres?' At first he said No, he couldn't, and then he wasn't sure about it, and then he'd go and try. So at last he went up-stairs, where there was a sort of loft, and presently down comes my man himself in his shirt-sleeves.

"'Well,' he says, 'this seems to be raythera pressing matter of yours.' 'Yes,' I says, 'it *is* raythera pressing matter, and you'll find it a bargain—dirt cheap.' 'I ain't in partickler want of a bargain just now,' he says, 'but where is it?' 'Why,' I says, 'the turn-out's just outside. Come and look at it.' He hasn't any suspicions, and away we go. And the first thing that happens is, that the horse runs away with my friend (who knows no more of driving than a child) when he takes a little trot along the road to show his paces. You never saw such a game in your life!

"When the bolt is over, and the turn-out has come to a standstill again, Fikey walks round and round it as grave as a judge—me too. 'There, sir!' I says. 'There's a neat thing!' 'It ain't a bad style of thing,' he says. 'I believe you,' says I. 'And there's a horse!'—for I saw him looking at it. 'Rising eight!' I says, rubbing his fore-legs. (Bless you, there ain't a man in the world knows less of horses than I do, but I'd heard my friend at the Livery Stables say he was eight year old, so I says, as knowing as possible, 'Rising Eight.') 'Rising eight, is he?' says he. 'Rising eight,' says I. 'Well,' he says, 'what do you want for it?' 'Why, the first and last figure for the whole concern is five-and-twenty pound!' 'That's very cheap!' he says, looking at me. 'Ain't it?' I says. 'I told you it was a bargain! Now, without any higgling and haggling about it, what I want is to sell, and that's my price. Further, I'll make it easy to you, and take half the money down, and you can do a bit of stiff* for the balance.' 'Well,' he says again, 'that's very cheap.' 'I believe you,' says I; 'get in and try it, and you'll buy it. Come! take a trial!'

"Ecod, he gets in, and we get in, and we drive along the

* Give a bill.

road, to show him to one of the railway clerks that was hid in the public-house window to identify him. But the clerk was bothered, and didn't know whether it was him, or wasn't—because the reason why? I'll tell you,—on account of his having shaved his whiskers. 'It's a clever little horse,' he says, 'and trots well; and the shay runs light.' 'Not a doubt about it,' I says. 'And now, Mr. Fikey, I may as well make it all right, without wasting any more of your time. The fact is, I'm Inspector Wield, and you're my prisoner.' 'You don't mean that?' he says. 'I do, indeed.' 'Then burn my body,' says Fikey, 'if this ain't *too* bad!'

"Perhaps you never saw a man so knocked over with surprise. 'I hope you'll let me have my coat?' he says. 'By all means.' 'Well, then, let's drive to the factory.' 'Why, not exactly that, I think,' said I; 'I've been there, once before, to-day. Suppose we send for it.' He saw it was no go, so he sent for it, and put it on, and we drove him up to London, comfortable."

This reminiscence is in the height of its success, when a general proposal is made to the fresh-complexioned, smooth-faced officer, with the strange air of simplicity, to tell the "Butcher's Story."

The fresh-complexioned, smooth-faced officer, with the strange air of simplicity, began with a rustic smile, and in a soft, wheedling tone of voice, to relate the Butcher's Story, thus:

"It's just about six years ago, now, since information was given at Scotland Yard of there being extensive robberies of lawns aad silks going on, at some wholesale houses in the City. Directions were given for the business being looked into; and Straw, and Fendall, and me, we were all in it."

"When you received your instructions," said we, "you went away, and held a sort of Cabinet Council together?"

The smooth-faced officer coaxingly replied, "Ye-es. Just so. We turned it over among ourselves a good deal. It appeared, when we went into it, that the goods were sold by the receivers extraordinarily cheap—much cheaper than they could have been if they had been honestly come by. The receivers were in the trade, and kept capital shops—establishments of the first respectability—one of 'em at the West End, one down in Westminster. After a

lot of watching and inquiry, and this and that among ourselves, we found that the job was managed, and the purchases of the stolen goods made, at a little public-house near Smithfield, down by Saint Bartholomew's; where the Warehouse Porters, who were the thieves, took 'em for that purpose, don't you see? and made appointments to meet the people that went between themselves and the receivers. This public-house was principally used by journeymen butchers from the country, out of place, and in want of situations; so, what did we do, but—ha, ha, ha!—we agreed that I should be dressed up like a butcher myself, and go and live there!"

Never, surely, was a faculty of observation better brought to bear upon a purpose, than that which picked out this officer for the part. Nothing in all creation could have suited him better. Even while he spoke, he became a greasy, sleepy, shy, good-natured, chuckle-headed, unsuspicious, and confiding young butcher. His very hair seemed to have suet in it, as he made it smooth upon his head, and his fresh complexion to be lubricated by large quantities of animal food.

——"So I—ha, ha, ha!" (always with the confiding snigger of the foolish young butcher) "so I dressed myself in the regular way, made up a little bundle of clothes, and went to the public-house, and asked if I could have a lodging there? They says, 'yes, you can have a lodging here,' and I got a bedroom, and settled myself down in the tap. There was a number of people about the place, and coming backwards and forwards to the house; and first one says, and then another says, 'Are you from the country, young man?' 'Yes,' I says, 'I am. I'm come out of Northamptonshire, and I'm quite lonely here, for I don't know London at all, and it's such a mighty big town.' 'It *is* a big town,' they says. 'Oh, it's a *very* big town!' I says. 'Really and truly I never was in such a town. It quite confuses of me!'—and all that, you know.

"When some of the Journeymen Butchers that used the house found that I wanted a place, they says, 'Oh, we'll get you a place!' and they actually took me to a sight of places, in Newgate Market, Newport Market, Clare, Carnaby—I don't know where all. But the wages was—ha, ha, ha!—was not sufficient, and I never could suit myself, don't you see? Some of the queer frequenters of the house

were a little suspicious of me at first, and I was obliged to be very cautious indeed, how I communicated with Straw or Fendall. Sometimes, when I went out, pretending to stop and look into the shop windows, and just casting my eye round, I used to see some of 'em following me; but, being perhaps better accustomed than they thought for, to that sort of thing, I used to lead 'em on as far as I thought necessary or convenient—sometimes a long way—and then turn sharp round, and meet 'em, and say, 'Oh, dear, how glad I am to come upon you so fortunate! This London's such a place, I'm blowed if I ain't lost again!' And then we'd go back all together, to the public-house, and—ha, ha, ha! and smoke our pipes, don't you see?

"They were very attentive to me, I am sure. It was a common thing, while I was living there, for some of 'em to take me out, and show me London. They showed me the Prisons—showed me Newgate—and when they showed me Newgate, I stops at the place where the Porters pitch their loads, and says, 'Oh dear, is this where they hang the men? Oh Lor!' 'That!' they says, 'what a simple cove he is! *That* ain't it!' And then, they pointed out which *was* it, and I says 'Lor!' and they says, 'Now you'll know it agen, won't you?' And I said I thought I should if I tried hard—and I assure you I kept a sharp look-out for the City Police when we were out in this way, for if any of 'em had happened to know me, and had spoke to me, it would have been all up in a minute. However, by good luck such a thing never happened, and all went on quiet: though the difficulties I had in communicating with my brother officers were quite extraordinary.

"The stolen goods that were brought to the public-house by the Warehouse Porters, were always disposed of in a back parlour. For a long time, I never could get into this parlour, or see what was done there. As I sat smoking my pipe, like an innocent young chap, by the tap-room fire, I heard some of the parties to the robbery, as they came in and out, say softly to the landlord, 'Who's that? What does *he* do here?' 'Bless your soul,' says the landlord, 'he's only a'—ha, ha, ha!—'he's only a green young fellow from the country, as is looking for a butcher's situwation. Don't mind *him!*' So, in course of time, they were so convinced of my being green, and got to be so accustomed to me, that I was as free of the parlour as any

of 'em, and I have seen as much as Seventy Pounds worth of fine lawn sold there, in one night, that was stolen from a warehouse in Friday Street. After the sale the buyers always stood treat—hot supper, or dinner, or what not—and they'd say on those occasions, 'Come on, Butcher! Put your best leg foremost, young 'un, and walk into it!' Which I used to do—and hear, at table, all manner of particulars that it was very important for us Detectives to know.

"This went on for ten weeks. I lived in the public-house all the time, and never was out of the Butcher's dress—except in bed. At last, when I had followed seven of the thieves, and set 'em to rights—that's an expression of ours, don't you see, by which I mean to say that I traced 'em, and found out where the robberies were done, and all about 'em—Straw, and Fendall, and I, gave one another the office, and at a time agreed upon, a descent was made upon the public-house, and the apprehensions effected. One of the first things the officers did, was to collar me—for the parties to the robbery weren't to suppose yet that I was anything but a Butcher—on which the landlord cries out, 'Don't take *him*,' he says, 'whatever you do! He's only a poor young chap from the country, and butter wouldn't melt in his mouth!' However, they—ha, ha, ha! —they took me, and pretended to search my bedroom, where nothing was found but an old fiddle belonging to the landlord, that had got there somehow or another. But, it entirely changed the landlord's opinion, for when it was produced, he says, 'My fiddle! The Butcher's a purloiner! I give him into custody for the robbery of a musical instrument!'

"The man that had stolen the goods in Friday Street was not taken yet. He had told me, in confidence, that he had his suspicions there was something wrong (on account of the City Police having captured one of the party), and that he was going to make himself scarce. I asked him, 'Where do you mean to go, Mr. Shepherdson?' 'Why, Butcher,' says he, 'the Setting Moon, in the Commercial Road, is a snug house, and I shall hang out there for a time. I shall call myself Simpson, which appears to me to be a modest sort of a name. Perhaps you'll give us a look in, Butcher?' 'Well,' says I, 'I think I *will* give you a call'—which I fully intended, don't you see, because,

of course, he was to be taken! I went over to the Setting Moon next day, with a brother officer, and asked at the bar for Simpson. They pointed out his room, upstairs. As we were going up, he looks down over the banisters, and calls out, 'Halloa, Butcher! is that you?' 'Yes, it's me. How do you find yourself?' 'Bobbish,' he says; 'but who's that with you?' 'It's only a young man, that's a friend of mine,' I says. 'Come along, then,' says he; 'any friend of the Butcher's is as welcome as the Butcher!' So, I made my friend acquainted with him, and we took him into custody.

"You have no idea, sir, what a sight it was, in Court, when they first knew that I wasn't a Butcher, after all! I wasn't produced at the first examination, when there was a remand; but I was at the second. And when I stepped into the box, in full police uniform, and the whole party saw how they had been done, actually a groan of horror and dismay proceeded from 'em in the dock!

"At the Old Bailey, when their trials came on, Mr. Clarkson was engaged for the defence, and he *couldn't* make out how it was, about the Butcher. He thought, all along, it was a real Butcher. When the counsel for the prosecution said, 'I will now call before you, gentlemen, the Police-officer,' meaning myself, Mr. Clarkson says, 'Why Police-officer? Why more Police-officers? I don't want Police. We have had a great deal too much of the Police. I want the Butcher!' However, sir, he had the Butcher and the Police-officer, both in one. Out of seven prisoners committed for trial, five were found guilty, and some of 'em were transported. The respectable firm at the West End got a term of imprisonment; and that's the Butcher's Story!"

The story done, the chuckle-headed Butcher again resolved himself into the smooth-faced Detective. But, he was so extremely tickled by their having taken him about, when he was that Dragon in disguise, to show him London, that he could not help reverting to that point in his narrative; and gently repeating with the Butcher snigger, "'Oh dear,' I says, 'is that where they hang the men? Oh Lor!' '*That!*' says they. 'What a simple cove he is!'"

It being now late, and the party very modest in their fear of being too diffuse, there were some tokens of separa-

tion; when Sergeant Dornton, the soldierly-looking man, said, looking round him with a smile:

"Before we break up, sir, perhaps you might have some amusement in hearing of the Adventures of a Carpet Bag. They are very short; and, I think, curious."

We welcomed the Carpet Bag, as cordially as Mr. Shepherdson welcomed the false Butcher at the Setting Moon. Sergeant Dornton proceeded.

"In 1847, I was despatched to Chatham, in search of one Mesheck, a Jew. He had been carrying on, pretty heavily, in the bill-stealing way, getting acceptances from young men of good connections (in the army chiefly), on pretence of discount, and bolting with the same.

"Mesheck was off, before I got to Chatham. All I could learn about him was, that he had gone, probably to London, and had with him—a Carpet Bag.

"I came back to town, by the last train from Blackwall, and made inquiries concerning a Jew passenger with—a Carpet Bag.

"The office was shut up, it being the last train. There were only two or three porters left. Looking after a Jew with a Carpet Bag, on the Blackwall Railway, which was then the highroad to a great Military Depôt, was worse than looking after a needle in a hayrick. But it happened that one of these porters had carried, for a certain Jew, to a certain public-house, a certain—Carpet Bag.

"I went to the public-house, but the Jew had only left his luggage there for a few hours, and had called for it in a cab, and taken it away. I put such questions there, and to the porter, as I thought prudent, and got at this description of—the Carpet Bag.

"It was a bag which had, on one side of it, worked in worsted, a green parrot on a stand. A green parrot on a stand was the means by which to identify that—Carpet Bag.

"I traced Mesheck, by means of this green parrot on a stand, to Cheltenham, to Birmingham, to Liverpool, to the Atlantic Ocean. At Liverpool he was too many for me. He had gone to the United States, and I gave up all thoughts of Mesheck, and likewise of his—Carpet Bag.

"Many months afterwards—near a year afterwards—there was a bank in Ireland robbed of seven thousand pounds, by a person of the name of Doctor Dundey, who escaped to America; from which country some of the stolen

notes came home. He was supposed to have bought a farm in New Jersey. Under proper management, that estate could be seized and sold, for the benefit of the parties he had defrauded. I was sent off to America for this purpose.

"I landed at Boston. I went on to New York. I found that he had lately changed New York paper-money for New Jersey paper-money, and had banked cash in New Brunswick. To take this Doctor Dundey, it was necessary to entrap him into the State of New York, which required a deal of artifice and trouble. At one time, he couldn't be drawn into an appointment. At another time, he appointed to come to meet me, and a New York officer, on a pretext I made; and then his children had the measles. At last he came, per steam-boat, and I took him, and lodged him in a New York prison called the Tombs; which I dare say you know, sir?"

Editorial acknowledgment to that effect.

"I went to the Tombs, on the morning after his capture, to attend the examination before the magistrate. I was passing through the magistrate's private room, when, happening to look round me to take notice of the place, as we generally have a habit of doing, I clapped my eyes, in one corner, on a—Carpet Bag.

"What did I see upon that Carpet Bag, if you'll believe me, but a green parrot on a stand, as large as life.

"'That Carpet Bag, with the representation of a green parrot on a stand,' said I, 'belongs to an English Jew, named Aaron Mesheck, and to no other man, alive or dead!'

"I give you my word the New York Police Officers were doubled up with surprise.

"'How did you ever come to know that?' said they.

"'I think I ought to know that green parrot by this time,' said I; 'for I have had as pretty a dance after that bird, at home, as ever I had, in all my life!'"

"And was it Mesheck's?" we submissively inquired.

"Was it, sir? Of course it was! He was in custody for another offence, in that very identical Tombs, at that very identical time. And, more than that! Some memoranda, relating to the fraud for which I had vainly endeavoured to take him, were found to be, at that moment, lying in that very same individual—Carpet Bag!"

Such are the curious coincidences and such is the peculiar ability, always sharpening and being improved by practice, and always adapting itself to every variety of circumstances, and opposing itself to every new device that perverted ingenuity can invent, for which this important social branch of the public service is remarkable! For ever on the watch, with their wits stretched to the utmost, these officers have, from day to day and year to year, to set themselves against every novelty of trickery and dexterity that the combined imaginations of all the lawless rascals in England can devise, and to keep pace with every such invention that comes out. In the Courts of Justice, the materials of thousands of such stories as we have narrated —often elevated into the marvellous and romantic, by the circumstances of the case—are dryly compressed into the set phrase, "in consequence of information I received, I did so and so." Suspicion was to be directed, by careful inference and deduction, upon the right person; the right person was to be taken, wherever he had gone, or whatever he was doing to avoid detection: he is taken; there he is at the bar; that is enough. From information I, the officer, received, I did it; and, according to the custom in these cases, I say no more.

These games of chess, played with live pieces, are played before small audiences, and are chronicled nowhere. The interest of the game supports the player. Its results are enough for Justice. To compare great things with small, suppose LEVERRIER or ADAMS informing the public that from information he had received he had discovered a new planet; or COLUMBUS informing the public of his day that from information he had received he had discovered a new continent; so the Detectives inform it that they have discovered a new fraud or an old offender, and the process is unknown.

Thus, at midnight, closed the proceedings of our curious and interesting party. But one other circumstance finally wound up the evening, after our Detective guests had left us. One of the sharpest among them, and the officer best acquainted with the Swell Mob, had his pocket picked, going home!

THREE "DETECTIVE" ANECDOTES.

I.—THE PAIR OF GLOVES.

"It's a singler story, sir," said Inspector Wield, of the Detective Police, who, in company with Sergeants Dornton and Mith, paid us another twilight visit, one July evening; "and I've been thinking you might like to know it.

"It's concerning the murder of the young woman, Eliza Grimwood, some years ago, over in the Waterloo Road. She was commonly called The Countess, because of her handsome appearance and her proud way of carrying of herself; and when I saw the poor Countess (I had known her well to speak to), lying dead, with her throat cut, on the floor of her bedroom, you'll believe me that a variety of reflections calculated to make a man rather low in his spirits, came into my head.

"That's neither here nor there. I went to the house the morning after the murder, and examined the body, and made a general observation of the bedroom where it was. Turning down the pillow of the bed with my hand, I found underneath it, a pair of gloves. A pair of gentleman's dress gloves, very dirty; and inside the lining, the letters TR, and a cross.

"Well, sir, I took them gloves away, and I showed 'em to the magistrate, over at Union Hall, before whom the case was. He says, 'Wield,' he says, 'there's no doubt this is a discovery that may lead to something very important; and what you have got to do, Wield, is, to find out the owner of these gloves.'

"I was of the same opinion, of course, and I went at it immediately. I looked at the gloves pretty narrowly, and it was my opinion that they had been cleaned. There was a smell of sulphur and rosin about 'em, you know, which cleaned gloves usually have, more or less. I took 'em over to a friend of mine at Kennington, who was in that line, and I put it to him. 'What do you say now? Have these gloves been cleaned?' 'These gloves have been cleaned,' says he. 'Have you any idea who cleaned them?' says I. 'Not at all,' says he; 'I've a very distinct idea who *didn't*

clean 'em, and that's myself. But I'll tell you what, Wield, there ain't above eight or nine reg'lar glove cleaners in London,'—there were not, at that time, it seems—'and I think I can give you their addresses, and you may find out, by that means, who did clean 'em.' Accordingly, he gave me the directions, and I went here, and I went there, and I looked up this man, and I looked up that man; but, though they all agreed that the gloves had been cleaned, I couldn't find the man, woman, or child, that had cleaned that aforesaid pair of gloves.

"What with this person not being at home, and that person being expected home in the afternoon, and so forth, the inquiry took me three days. On the evening of the third day, coming over Waterloo Bridge from the Surrey side of the river, quite beat, and very much vexed and disappointed, I thought I'd have a shilling's worth of entertainment at the Lyceum Theatre to freshen myself up. So I went into the Pit, at half-price, and I sat myself down next to a very quiet, modest sort of young man. Seeing I was a stranger (which I thought it just as well to appear to be) he told me the names of the actors on the stage, and we got into conversation. When the play was over, we came out together, and I said, 'We've been very companionable and agreeable, and perhaps you wouldn't object to a drain?' 'Well, you're very good,' says he; 'I *shouldn't* object to a drain.' Accordingly, we went to a public-house, near the Theatre, sat ourselves down in a quiet room up stairs on the first floor, and called for a pint of half-and-half, apiece, and a pipe.

"Well, sir, we put our pipes aboard, and we drank our half-and-half, and sat a talking, very sociably, when the young man says, 'You must excuse me stopping very long,' he says, 'because I'm forced to go home in good time. I must be at work all night.' 'At work all night?' says I. 'You ain't a baker?' 'No,' he says, laughing, 'I ain't a baker.' 'I thought not,' says I, 'you haven't the looks of a baker.' 'No,' says he, 'I'm a glove-cleaner.'

"I never was more astonished in my life, than when I heard them words come out of his lips. 'You're a glove-cleaner, are you?' says I. 'Yes,' he says, 'I am.' 'Then, perhaps,' says I, taking the gloves out of my pocket, 'you can tell me who cleaned this pair of gloves? It's a rum story,' I says. 'I was dining over at Lambeth,

the other day, at a free-and-easy—quite promiscuous—with a public company—when some gentleman, he left these gloves behind him! Another gentleman and me, you see, we laid a wager of a sovereign, that I wouldn't find out who they belonged to. I've spent as much as seven shillings already, in trying to discover; but, if you could help me, I'd stand another seven and welcome. You see there's TR and a cross, inside.' '*I* see,' he says. 'Bless you, *I* know these gloves very well! I've seen dozens of pairs belonging to the same party.' 'No?' says I. 'Yes,' says he. 'Then you know who cleaned 'em?' says I. 'Rather so,' says he. 'My father cleaned 'em.'

"'Where does your father live?' says I. 'Just round the corner,' says the young man, 'near Exeter Street, here. He'll tell you who they belong to, directly.' 'Would you come round with me now?' says I. 'Certainly,' says he, 'but you needn't tell my father that you found me at the play, you know, because he mightn't like it.' 'All right!' We went round to the place, and there we found an old man in a white apron, with two or three daughters, all rubbing and cleaning away at lots of gloves, in a front parlour. 'Oh, Father!' says the young man, 'here's a person been and made a bet about the ownership of a pair of gloves, and I've told him you can settle it.' 'Good evening, sir,' says I to the old gentleman. 'Here's the gloves your son speaks of. Letters TR, you see, and a cross.' 'Oh yes,' he says, 'I know these gloves very well; I've cleaned dozens of pairs of 'em. They belong to Mr. Trinkle, the great upholsterer in Cheapside.' 'Did you get 'em from Mr. Trinkle, direct,' says I, 'if you'll excuse my asking the question?' 'No,' says he; 'Mr. Trinkle always sends 'em to Mr. Phibbs's, the haberdasher's, opposite his shop, and the haberdasher sends 'em to me.' 'Perhaps *you* wouldn't object to a drain?' says I. 'Not in the least!' says he. So I took the old gentleman out, and had a little more talk with him and his son, over a glass, and we parted ex-cellent friends.

"This was late on a Saturday night. First thing on the Monday morning, I went to the haberdasher's shop, opposite Mr. Trinkle's, the great upholsterer's in Cheapside. 'Mr. Phibbs in the way?' 'My name is Phibbs.' 'Oh! I believe you sent this pair of gloves to be cleaned?' 'Yes, I did, for young Mr. Trinkle over the way. There

he is in the shop!' 'Oh! that's him in the shop, is it? Him in the green coat?' 'The same individual.' 'Well, Mr. Phibbs, this is an unpleasant affair; but the fact is, I am Inspector Wield of the Detective Police, and I found these gloves under the pillow of the young woman that was murdered the other day, over in the Waterloo Road.' 'Good Heaven!' says he. 'He's a most respectable young man, and if his father was to hear of it, it would be the ruin of him!' 'I'm very sorry for it,' says I, but I must take him into custody.' 'Good Heaven!' says Mr. Phibbs, again; 'can nothing be done?' 'Nothing,' says I. 'Will you allow me to call him over here,' says he, 'that his father may not see it done?' 'I don't object to that,' says I; 'but unfortunately, Mr. Phibbs, I can't allow of any communication between you. If any was attempted, I should have to interfere directly. Perhaps you'll beckon him over here?' Mr. Phibbs went to the door and beckoned, and the young fellow came across the street directly; a smart, brisk young fellow.

"'Good morning, sir,' says I. 'Good morning, sir,' says he. 'Would you allow me to inquire, sir, says I, 'if you ever had any acquaintance with a party of the name of Grimwood?' 'Grimwood! Grimwood!' says he, 'No!' 'You know the Waterloo Road?' 'Oh! of course I know the Waterloo Road!' 'Happen to have heard of a young woman being murdered there?' 'Yes, I read it in the paper, and very sorry I was to read it.' 'Here's a pair of gloves belonging to you, that I found under her pillow the morning afterwards!'

"He was in a dreadful state, sir; a dreadful state! 'Mr. Wield,' he says, 'upon my solemn oath I never was there. I never so much as saw her, to my knowledge, in my life!' 'I am very sorry,' says I. 'To tell you the truth, I don't think you *are* the murderer, but I must take you to Union Hall in a cab. However, I think it's a case of that sort, that, at present, at all events, the magistrate will hear it in private.'

"A private examination took place, and then it came out that this young man was acquainted with a cousin of the unfortunate Eliza Grimwood, and that, calling to see this cousin a day or two before the murder, he left these gloves upon the table. Who should come in, shortly afterwards, but Eliza Grimwood! 'Whose gloves are these?' she says,

taking 'em up. 'Those are Mr. Trinkle's gloves,' says her cousin. 'Oh!' says she, 'they are very dirty, and of no use to him, I am sure. I shall take 'em away for my girl to clean the stoves with.' And she put 'em in her pocket. The girl had used 'em to clean the stoves, and, I have no doubt, had left 'em lying on the bedroom mantelpiece, or on the drawers, or somewhere; and her mistress, looking round to see that the room was tidy, had caught 'em up and put 'em under the pillow where I found 'em.

"That's the story, sir."

II.—THE ARTFUL TOUCH.

"One of the most *beautiful* things that ever was done, perhaps," said Inspector Wield, emphasising the adjective, as preparing us to expect dexterity or ingenuity rather than strong interest, "was a move of Sergeant Witchem's. It was a lovely idea!

"Witchem and me were down at Epsom one Derby Day, waiting at the station for the Swell Mob. As I mentioned, when we were talking about these things before, we are ready at the station when there's races, or an Agricultural Show, or a Chancellor sworn in for an university, or Jenny Lind, or anything of that sort; and as the Swell Mob come down, we send 'em back again by the next train. But some of the Swell Mob, on the occasion of this Derby that I refer to, so far kidded us as to hire a horse and shay; start away from London by Whitechapel, and miles round; come into Epsom from the opposite direction; and go to work, right and left, on the course, while we were waiting for 'em at the Rail. That, however, ain't the point of what I'm going to tell you.

"While Witchem and me were waiting at the station, there comes up one Mr. Tatt; a gentleman formerly in the public line, quite an amateur Detective in his way, and very much respected. 'Halloa, Charley Wield,' he says. 'What are you doing here? On the look-out for some of your old friends?' 'Yes, the old move, Mr. Tatt.' 'Come along,' he says, 'you and Witchem, and have a glass of sherry.' 'We can't stir from the place,' says I, 'till the next train comes in; but after that, we will with pleasure.' Mr. Tatt waits, and the train comes in, and then Witchem and me go off with him to the Hotel. Mr.

Tatt he's got up quite regardless of expense, for the occasion; and in his shirt-front there's a beautiful diamond prop, cost him fifteen or twenty pound—a very handsome pin indeed. We drink our sherry at the bar, and have had our three or four glasses, when Witchem cries suddenly, 'Look out, Mr. Wield! stand fast!' and a dash is made into the place by the Swell Mob—four of 'em—that have come down as I tell you, and in a moment Mr. Tatt's prop is gone! Witchem, he cuts 'em off at the door, I lay about me as hard as I can, Mr. Tatt shows fight like a good 'un, and there we are, all down together, heads and heels, knocking about on the floor of the bar—perhaps you never see such a scene of confusion! However, we stick to our men (Mr. Tatt being as good as any officer), and we take 'em all, and carry 'em off to the station. The station's full of people, who have been took on the course; and it's a precious piece of work to get 'em secured. However, we do it at last, and we search 'em; but nothing's found upon 'em, and they're locked up; and a pretty state of heat we are in by that time, I assure you!

"I was very blank over it, myself, to think that the prop had been passed away; and I said to Witchem, when we had set 'em to rights, and were cooling ourselves along with Mr. Tatt, 'we don't take much by *this* move, anyway, for nothing's found upon 'em, and it's only the braggadocia,* after all.' 'What do you mean, Mr. Wield?' says Witchem. 'Here's the diamond pin!' and in the palm of his hand there it was, safe and sound! 'Why, in the name of wonder,' says me and Mr. Tatt, in astonishment, 'how did you come by that?' 'I'll tell you how I come by it,' says he. 'I saw which of 'em took it; and when we were all down on the floor together, knocking about, I just gave him a little touch on the back of his hand, as I knew his pal would; and he thought it WAS his pal; and gave it me!' It was beautiful, beau-ti-ful!

"Even that was hardly the best of the case, for that chap was tried at the Quarter Sessions at Guildford. You know what Quarter Sessions are, sir. Well, if you'll believe me, while them slow justices were looking over the Acts of Parliament, to see what they could do to him, I'm blowed if he didn't cut out of the dock before their faces! He cut out of the dock, sir, then and there; swam across a

* Three months' imprisonment as reputed thieves.

river; and got up into a tree to dry himself. In the tree he was took—an old woman having seen him climb up—and Witchem's artful touch transported him!"

III.—THE SOFA.

"What young men will do, sometimes, to ruin themselves and break their friends' hearts," said Sergeant Dornton, "it's surprising! I had a case at St. Blank's Hospital which was of this sort. A bad case, indeed, with a bad end!"

"The Secretary, and the House-Surgeon, and the Treasurer, of St. Blank's Hospital, came to Scotland Yard to give information of numerous robberies having been committed on the students. The students could leave nothing in the pockets of their great-coats, while the great-coats were hanging at the hospital, but it was almost certain to be stolen. Property of various descriptions was constantly being lost; and the gentlemen were naturally uneasy about it, and anxious, for the credit of the institution, that the thief or thieves should be discovered. The case was entrusted to me, and I went to the hospital.

"'Now, gentlemen,' said I, after we had talked it over; 'I understand this property is usually lost from one room.'

"Yes, they said. It was.

"'I should wish, if you please,' said I, 'to see the room.'

"It was a good-sized bare room down-stairs, with a few tables and forms in it, and a row of pegs, all round, for hats and coats.

"'Next, gentlemen,' said I, 'do you suspect anybody?'

"Yes, they said. They did suspect somebody. They were sorry to say, they suspected one of the porters.

"'I should like,' said I, 'to have that man pointed out to me, and to have a little time to look after him.'

"He was pointed out, and I looked after him, and then I went back to the hospital, and said, 'Now, gentlemen, it's not the porter. He's, unfortunately for himself, a little too fond of drink, but he's nothing worse. My suspicion is, that these robberies are committed by one of the students; and if you'll put me a sofa into that room where the pegs are—as there's no closet—I think I shall be able to

detect the thief. I wish the sofa, if you please, to be covered with chintz, or something of that sort, so that I may lie on my chest, underneath it, without being seen.'

"The sofa was provided, and next day at eleven o'clock, before any of the students came, I went there, with those gentlemen, to get underneath it. It turned out to be one of those old-fashioned sofas with a great cross-beam at the bottom, that would have broken my back in no time if I could ever have got below it. We had quite a job to break all this away in the time; however, I fell to work, and they fell to work, and we broke it out, and made a clear place for me. I got under the sofa, lay down on my chest, took out my knife, and made a convenient hole in the chintz to look through. It was then settled between me and the gentlemen that when the students were all up in the wards, one of the gentlemen should come in, and hang up a great-coat on one of the pegs. And that that great-coat should have, in one of the pockets, a pocket-book containing marked money.

"After I had been there some time, the students began to drop into the room, by ones, and twos, and threes, and to talk about all sorts of things, little thinking there was anybody under the sofa—and then to go up-stairs. At last there came in one who remained until he was alone in the room by himself. A tallish, good-looking young man of one or two and twenty, with a light whisker. He went to a particular hat-peg, took off a good hat that was hanging there, tried it on, hung his own hat in its place, and hung that hat on another peg, nearly opposite to me. I then felt quite certain that he was the thief, and would come back by-and-bye.

"When they were all up-stairs, the gentleman came in with the great-coat. I showed him where to hang it, so that I might have a good view of it; and he went away; and I lay under the sofa on my chest, for a couple of hours or so, waiting.

"At last, the same young man came down. He walked across the room, whistling—stopped and listened—took another walk and whistled—stopped again, and listened—then began to go regularly round the pegs, feeling in the pockets of all the coats. When he came to THE great-coat, and felt the pocket-book, he was so eager and so hurried that he broke the strap in tearing it open. As he began

to put the money in his pocket, I crawled out from under the sofa, and his eyes met mine.

"My face, as you may perceive, is brown now, but it was pale at that time, my health not being good; and looked as long as a horse's. Besides which, there was a great draught of air from the door, underneath the sofa, and I had tied a handkerchief round my head; so what I looked like, altogether, I don't know. He turned blue —literally blue—when he saw me crawling out, and I couldn't feel surprised at it.

"'I am an officer of the Detective Police,' said I, 'and have been lying here, since you first came in this morning. I regret, for the sake of yourself and your friends, that you should have done what you have; but this case is complete. You have the pocket-book in your hand and the money upon you; and I must take you into custody!'

"It was impossible to make out any case in his behalf, and on his trial he pleaded guilty. How or when he got the means I don't know; but while he was awaiting his sentence, he poisoned himself in Newgate."

We inquired of this officer, on the conclusion of the foregoing anecdote, whether the time appeared long, or short, when he lay in that constrained position under the sofa?

"Why, you see, sir," he replied, "if he hadn't come in, the first time, and I had not been quite sure he was the thief, and would return, the time would have seemed long. But, as it was, I being dead certain of my man, the time seemed pretty short."

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*FROM THE RAVEN IN THE HAPPY FAMILY.—III.

I SUPPOSE you thought I was dead? No such thing. Don't flatter yourselves that I haven't got my eye upon you. I am wide awake, and you give me plenty to look at.

I have begun my great work about you. I have been collecting materials from the Horse, to begin with. You are glad to hear it, ain't you? Very likely. Oh, he gives

you a nice character! He makes you out a charming set of fellows.

He informs me, by the bye, that he is a distant relation of the pony that was taken up in a balloon a few weeks ago; and that the pony's account of your going to see him at Vauxhall Gardens, is an amazing thing. The pony says, that when he looked round on the assembled crowd, come to see the realisation of the wood-cut in the bill, he found it impossible to discover which was the real Mister Green —there were so many Mister Greens—and they were all so very green.

But, that's the way with you. You know it is. Don't tell me! You'd go to see anything that other people went to see. And don't flatter yourselves that I am referring to "the vulgar curiosity" as you choose to call it, when you mean some curiosity in which you don't participate yourselves. The polite curiosity in this country, is as vulgar as any curiosity in the world.

Of course you'll tell me, no it isn't, but I say yes it is. What have you got to say for yourselves about the Nepaulese Princes, I should like to know? Why, there has been more crowding, and pressing, and pushing, and jostling, and struggling, and striving, in genteel houses this last season, on account of those Nepaulese Princes, than would take place in vulgar Cremorne Gardens, and Greenwich Park, at Easter time and Whitsuntide! And what for? Do you know anything about 'em? Have you any idea why they came here? Can you put your finger on their country in the map? Have you ever asked yourselves a dozen common questions about its climate, natural history, government, productions, customs, religion, manners? Not you! Here are a couple of swarthy Princes very much out of their element, walking about in wide muslin trousers and sprinkled all over with gems (like the clock-work figure on the old round platform in the street, grown up) and they're fashionable outlandish monsters, and it's a new excitement for you to get a stare at 'em. As to asking 'em to dinner, and seeing 'em sit at table without eating in your company (unclean animals as you are!) you fall into raptures at that. Quite delicious, isn't it? Ugh, you dunder-headed boobies!

I wonder what there is, new and strange, that you *wouldn't* lionise, as you call it. Can you suggest anything?

It's not a hippopotamus, I suppose. I hear from my brother-in-law in the Zoological Gardens that you are always pelting away into the Regent's Park, by thousands, to see the hippopotami, ain't you? You study one attentively when you *do* see one, don't you? You come away so much wiser than you went, reflecting so profoundly on the wonders of creation—eh?

Bah! You follow one another like wild geese, but you are not so good to eat!

These, however, are not the observations of my friend the Horse. *He* takes you in another point of view. Would you like to read his contribution to my Natural History of you? No? You shall then.

He is a Cab-horse now. He wasn't always, but he is now, and his usual stand is close to our Proprietor's usual stand. That's the way we have come into communication, we "dumb animals." Ha, ha! Dumb, too! Oh, the conceit of you men, because you can bother the community out of their five wits, by making speeches!

Well. I mentioned to this Horse that I should be glad to have his opinions and experiences of you. Here they are:

"At the request of my honourable friend the Raven, I proceed to offer a few remarks in reference to the animal called Man. I have had varied experience of this strange creature for fifteen years, and am now driven by a Man, in the hackney cabriolet, number twelve thousand four hundred and fifty-two.

"The sense Man entertains of his own inferiority to the nobler animals—and I am now more particularly referring to the Horse—has impressed me forcibly, in the course of my career. If a Man knows a Horse well, he is prouder of it than of any knowledge of himself, within the range of his limited capacity. He regards it as the sum of all human acquisition. If he is learned in a Horse, he has nothing else to learn. And the same remark applies, with some little abatement, to his acquaintance with Dogs. I have seen a good deal of Man in my time, but I think I have never met a Man who didn't feel it necessary to his reputation to pretend, on occasion, that he knew something of Horses and Dogs, though he really knew nothing. As to making us a subject of conversation, my opinion is that we are more talked about, than history, philosophy, liter-

ature, art and science, all put together. I have encountered innumerable gentlemen in the country, who were totally incapable of interest in anything but Horses and Dogs—except Cattle. And I have always been given to understand that they were the flower of the civilised world.

"It is very doubtful to me, whether there is upon the whole, anything Man is so ambitious to imitate, as an ostler, a jockey, a stage coachman, a horse-dealer, or a dog-fancier. There may be some other character which I do not immediately remember, that fires him with emulation; but if there be, I am sure it is connected with Horses, or Dogs, or both. This is an unconscious compliment, on the part of the tyrant, to the nobler animals, which I consider to be very remarkable. I have known Lords, and Baronets, and Members of Parliament, out of number, who have deserted every other calling, to become but indifferent stablemen or kennelmen, and be cheated on all hands, by the real aristocracy of those pursuits who were regularly born to the business.

"All this, I say, is a tribute to our superiority which I consider to be very remarkable. Yet, still, I can't quite understand it. Man can hardly devote himself to us, in admiration of our virtues, because he never imitates them. We Horses are as honest, though I say it, as animals can be. If, under the pressure of circumstances, we submit to act at a Circus, for instance, we always show that we are acting. We never deceive anybody. We would scorn to do it. If we are called upon to do anything in earnest, we do our best. If we are required to run a race falsely, and to lose when we could win, we are not to be relied upon, to commit a fraud; Man must come in at that point, and force us to it. And the extraordinary circumstance to me, is that Man (whom I take to be a powerful species of Monkey) is always making us nobler animals the instruments of his meanness and cupidity. The very name of our kind has become a byword for all sorts of trickery and cheating. We are as innocent as counters at a game—and yet this creature WILL play falsely with us!

"Man's opinion, good or bad, is not worth much, as any rational Horse knows. But justice is justice; and what I complain of, is that Mankind talks of us as if We had something to do with all this. They say that such a man

was 'ruined by Horses.' Ruined by Horses! They can't be open even in that, and say he was ruined by Men; but they lay it at *our* stable-door! As if we ever ruined anybody, or were ever doing anything but being ruined ourselves, in our generous desire to fulfil the useful purposes of our existence!

"In the same way, we get a bad name as if we were profligate company. 'So and so got among Horses, and it was all up with him.' Why, *we* would have reclaimed him —*we* would have made him temperate, industrious, punctual, steady, sensible—what harm would he ever have got from *us*, I should wish to ask?

"Upon the whole, speaking of him as I have found him, I should describe Man as an unmeaning and conceited creature, very seldom to be trusted, and not likely to make advances towards the honesty of the nobler animals. I should say that his power of warping the nobler animals to bad purposes, and damaging their reputation by his companionship, is, next to the art of growing oats, hay, carrots, and clover, one of his principal attributes. He is very unintelligible in his caprices; seldom expressing with distinctness what he wants of us; and relying greatly on our better judgment to find out. He is cruel, and fond of blood—particularly at a steeple-chase—and is very ungrateful

"And yet, so far as I can understand, he worships us too. He sets up images of us (not particularly like, but meant to be) in the streets, and calls upon his fellows to admire them, and believe in them. As well as I can make out, it is not of the least importance what images of Men are put astride upon these images of Horses, for I don't find any famous personage among them—except one, and *his* image seems to have been contracted for, by the gross. The jockeys who ride our statues are very queer jockeys, it appears to me, but it is something to find Man even posthumously sensible of what he owes to us. I believe that when he has done any great wrong to any very distinguished Horse, deceased, he gets up a subscription to have an awkward likeness of him made, and erects it in a public place, to be generally venerated. I can find no other reason for the statues of us that abound.

"It must be regarded as a part of the inconsistency of Man, that he erects no statues to the Donkeys—who,

though far inferior animals to ourselves, have great claims upon him. I should think a Donkey opposite the Horse at Hyde Park, another in Trafalgar Square, and a group of Donkeys, in brass, outside the Guildhall of the City of London (for I believe the Common Council Chamber is inside that building) would be pleasant and appropriate memorials.

"I am not aware that I can suggest anything more, to my honourable friend the Raven, which will not already have occurred to his fine intellect. Like myself, he is the victim of brute force, and must bear it until the present state of things is changed—as it possibly may be in the good time which I understand is coming if I wait a little longer."

There! How do you like that? That's the Horse! You shall have another animal's sentiments soon. I have communicated with plenty of 'em, and they are all down upon you. It's not I alone who have found you out. You are generally detected, I am happy to say, and shall be covered with confusion.

Talking about the horse, are you going to set up any more horses? Eh? Think a bit. Come! You haven't got horses enough yet, surely? Couldn't you put somebody else on horseback, and stick him up, at the cost of a few thousands? You have already statues to most of the "benefactors of mankind" (SEE ADVERTISEMENT) in your principal cities. You walk through groves of great inventors, instructors, discoverers, assuagers of pain, preventers of disease, suggesters of purifying thoughts, doers of noble deeds. Finish the list. Come!

Whom will you hoist into the saddle? Let's have a cardinal virtue! Shall it be Faith? Hope? Charity? Aye, Charity's the virtue to ride on horseback! Let's have Charity!

How shall we represent it, eh? What do you think? Royal? Certainly. Duke? Of course. Charity always was typified in that way, from the time of a certain widow, downwards. And there's nothing less left to put up; all the commoners who were "benefactors of mankind" having had their statues in the public places, long ago.

How shall we dress it? Rags? Low. Drapery? Commonplace. Field Marshal's uniform? The very thing!

Charity in a Field Marshal's uniform (none the worse for wear) with thirty thousand pounds a year, public money, in its pocket, and fifteen thousand more, public money, up behind, will be a piece of plain uncompromising truth in the highways and an honour to the country and the time.

Ha, ha, ha! You can't leave the memory of an unassuming, honest, good-natured, amiable old Duke alone, without bespattering it with your flunkeyism, can't you? That's right—and like you! Here are three brass buttons in my crop. I'll subscribe 'em all. One, to the statue of Charity; one, to a statue of Hope; one, to a statue of Faith. For Faith we'll have the Nepaulese Ambassador on horseback—being a prince. And for Hope, we'll put the Hippopotamus on horseback, and so make a group.

Let's have a meeting about it!

A POOR MAN'S TALE OF A PATENT.

I AM not used to writing for print. What working-man, that never labours less (some Mondays, and Christmas Time and Easter Time excepted) than twelve or fourteen hours a day, is? But I have been asked to put down, plain, what I have got to say; and so I take pen-and-ink, and do it to the best of my power, hoping defects will find excuse.

I was born, nigh London, but have worked in a shop at Birmingham (what you would call Manufactories, we call Shops), almost ever since I was out of my time. I served my apprenticeship at Deptford, nigh where I was born, and I am a smith by trade. My name is John. I have been called "Old John" ever since I was nineteen year of age, on account of not having much hair. I am fifty-six year of age at the present time, and I don't find myself with more hair, nor yet with less, to signify, than at nineteen year of age aforesaid.

I have been married five and thirty year, come next April. I was married on All Fools' Day. Let them laugh that win. I won a good wife that day, and it was as sensible a day to me as ever I had.

We have had a matter of ten children, six whereof are living. My eldest son is engineer in the Italian steam-packet "Mezzo Giorno, plying between Marseilles and Naples, and calling at Genoa, Leghorn, and Civita Vecchia." He was a good workman. He invented a many useful little things that brought him in—nothing. I have two sons doing well at Sydney, New South Wales—single, when last heard from. One of my sons (James) went wild and for a soldier, where he was shot in India, living six weeks in hospital with a musket-ball lodged in his shoulder-blade, which he wrote with his own hand. He was the best looking. One of my two daughters (Mary) is comfortable in her circumstances, but water on the chest. The other (Charlotte), her husband run away from her in the basest manner, and she and her three children live with us. The youngest, six year old, has a turn for mechanics.

I am not a Chartist, and I never was. I don't mean to say but what I see a good many public points to complain of, still I don't think that's the way to set them right. If I did think so, I should be a Chartist. But I don't think so, and I am not a Chartist. I read the paper, and hear discussion, at what we call "a parlour," in Birmingham, and I know many good men and workmen who are Chartists. Note. Not Physical force.

It won't be took as boastful in me, if I make the remark (for I can't put down what I have got to say, without putting that down before going any further), that I have always been of an ingenious turn. I once got twenty pound by a screw, and it's in use now. I have been twenty year, off and on, completing an Invention and perfecting it. I perfected of it, last Christmas Eve at ten o'clock at night. Me and my wife stood and let some tears fall over the Model, when it was done and I brought her in to take a look at it.

A friend of mine, by the name of William Butcher, is a Chartist. Moderate. He is a good speaker. He is very animated. I have often heard him deliver that what is, at every turn, in the way of us working-men, is, that too many places have been made, in the course of time, to provide for people that never ought to have been provided for; and that we have to obey forms and to pay fees to support those places when we shouldn't ought. "True" (delivers William Butcher), "all the public has to do this, but it

falls heaviest on the working-man, because he has least to spare; and likewise because impediments shouldn't be put in his way, when he wants redress of wrong or furtherance of right." Note. I have wrote down those words from William Butcher's own mouth. W. B. delivering them fresh for the aforesaid purpose.

Now, to my Model again. There it was, perfected of, on Christmas Eve, gone nigh a year, at ten o'clock at night. All the money I could spare I had laid out upon the Model; and when times was bad, or my daughter Charlotte's children sickly, or both, it had stood still, months at a spell. I had pulled it to pieces, and made it over again with improvements, I don't know how often. There it stood, at last, a perfected Model as aforesaid.

William Butcher and me had a long talk, Christmas Day, respecting of the Model. William is very sensible. But sometimes cranky. William said, "What will you do with it, John?" I said, "Patent it." William said, "How patent it, John?" I said, "By taking out a Patent." William then delivered that the law of Patent was a cruel wrong. William said, "John, if you make your invention public, before you get a Patent, any one may rob you of the fruits of your hard work. You are put in a cleft stick, John. Either you must drive a bargain very much against yourself, by getting a party to come forward beforehand with the great expenses of the Patent; or, you must be put about, from post to pillar, among so many parties, trying to make a better bargain for yourself, and showing your invention, that your invention will be took from you over your head." I said, "William Butcher, are you cranky? You are sometimes cranky." William said, "No, John, I tell you the truth;" which he then delivered more at length. I said to W. B. I would Patent the invention myself.

My wife's brother, George Bury of West Bromwich (his wife unfortunately took to drinking, made away with everything, and seventeen times committed to Birmingham Jail before happy release in every point of view), left my wife, his sister, when he died, a legacy of one hundred and twenty-eight pound ten, Bank of England Stocks. Me and my wife never broke into that money yet. Note. We might come to be old and past our work. We now agreed to Patent the invention. We said we would make a hole

in it—I mean in the aforesaid money—and Patent the invention. William Butcher wrote me a letter to Thomas Joy, in London. T. J. is a carpenter, six foot four in height, and plays quoits well. He lives in Chelsea, London, by the church. I got leave from the shop, to be took on again when I come back. I am a good workman. Not a Teetotaller; but never drunk. When the Christmas holidays were over, I went up to London by the Parliamentary Train, and hired a lodging for a week with Thomas Joy. He is married. He has one son gone to sea.

Thomas Joy delivered (from a book he had) that the first step to be took, in Patenting the invention, was to prepare a petition unto Queen Victoria. William Butcher had delivered similar, and drawn it up. Note. William is a ready writer. A declaration before a Master in Chancery was to be added to it. That, we likewise drew up. After a deal of trouble I found out a Master, in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, nigh Temple Bar, where I made the declaration, and paid eighteen-pence. I was told to take the declaration and petition to the Home Office, in Whitehall, where I left it to be signed by the Home Secretary (after I had found the office out), and where I paid two pound, two, and sixpence. In six days he signed it, and I was told to take it to the Attorney-General's chambers, and leave it there for a report. I did so, and paid four pound, four. Note. Nobody all through, ever thankful for their money, but all uncivil.

My lodging at Thomas Joy's was now hired for another week, whereof five days were gone. The Attorney-General made what they called a Report-of-course (my invention being, as William Butcher had delivered before starting, unopposed), and I was sent back with it to the Home Office. They made a Copy of it, which was called a Warrant. For this warrant, I paid seven pound, thirteen, and six. It was sent to the Queen, to sign. The Queen sent it back, signed. The Home Secretary signed it again. The gentleman throwed it at me when I called, and said, "Now take it to the Patent Office in Lincoln's Inn." I was then in my third week at Thomas Joy's living very sparing, on account of fees. I found myself losing heart.

At the Patent Office in Lincoln's Inn, they made "a draft of the Queen's bill," of my invention, and a "docket of the bill." I paid five pound, ten, and six, for this. They

"engrossed two copies of the bill; one for the Signet Office, and one for the Privy-Seal Office." I paid one pound, seven, and six, for this. Stamp-duty over and above, three pound. The Engrossing Clerk of the same office engrossed the Queen's bill for signature. I paid him one pound, one. Stamp-duty, again, one pound, ten. I was next to take the Queen's bill to the Attorney-General again, and get it signed again. I took it, and paid five pound more. I fetched it away, and took it to the Home Secretary again. He sent it to the Queen again. She signed it again. I paid seven pound, thirteen, and six, more, for this. I had been over a month at Thomas Joy's. I was quite wore out, patience and pocket.

Thomas Joy delivered all this, as it went on, to William Butcher. William Butcher delivered it again to three Birmingham Parlours, from which it got to all the other Parlours, and was took, as I have been told since, right through all the shops in the North of England. Note. William Butcher delivered, at his Parlour, in a speech, that it was a Patent way of making Chartists.

But I hadn't nigh done yet. The Queen's bill was to be took to the Signet Office in Somerset House, Strand—where the stamp shop is. The Clerk of the Signet made "a Signet bill for the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal." I paid him four pound, seven. The Clerk of the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal made "a Privy-Seal bill for the Lord Chancellor." I paid him, four pound, two. The Privy-Seal bill was handed over to the Clerk of the Patents, who engrossed the aforesaid. I paid him, five pound, seventeen, and eight; at the same time, I paid Stamp-duty for the Patent, in one lump, thirty pound. I next paid for "boxes for the Patent," nine and sixpence. Note. Thomas Joy would have made the same at a profit for eighteen-pence. I next paid "fees to the Deputy, the Lord Chancellor's Purse-bearer," two pound, two. I next paid "fees to the Clerk of the Hanaper," seven pound, thirteen. I next paid "fees to the Deputy Clerk of the Hanaper," ten shillings. I next paid, to the Lord Chancellor again, one pound, eleven, and six. Last of all, I paid "fees to the Deputy Sealer, and Deputy Chaff-wax," ten shillings and sixpence. I had lodged at Thomas Joy's over six weeks, and the unopposed Patent for my invention, for England only, had cost me ninety-six pound, seven, and

eightpence. If I had taken it out for the United Kingdom, it would have cost me more than three hundred pound.

Now, teaching had not come up but very limited when I was young. So much the worse for me you'll say. I say the same. William Butcher is twenty year younger than me. He knows a hundred year more. If William Butcher had wanted to Patent an invention, he might have been sharper than myself when hustled backwards and forwards among all those offices, though I doubt if so patient. Note. William being sometimes cranky, and consider porters, messengers, and clerks.

Thereby I say nothing of my being tired of my life, while I was Patenting my invention. But I put this: Is it reasonable to make a man feel as if, in inventing an ingenious improvement meant to do good, he had done something wrong? How else can a man feel, when he is met by such difficulties at every turn? All inventors taking out a Patent MUST feel so. And look at the expense. How hard on me, and how hard on the country if there's any merit in me (and my invention is took up now, I am thankful to say, and doing well), to put me to all that expense before I can move a finger! Make the addition yourself, and it'll come to ninety-six pound, seven, and eightpence. No more, and no less.

What can I say against William Butcher, about places? Look at the Home Secretary, the Attorney-General, the Patent Office, the Engrossing Clerk, the Lord Chancellor, the Privy Seal, the Clerk of the Patents, the Lord Chancellor's Purse-bearer, the Clerk of the Hanaper, the Deputy Clerk of the Hanaper, the Deputy Sealer, and the Deputy Chaff-wax. No man in England could get a Patent for an Indian-rubber band, or an iron-hoop, without feeing all of them. Some of them, over and over again. I went through thirty-five stages. I began with the Queen upon the Throne. I ended with the Deputy Chaff-wax. Note. I should like to see the Deputy Chaff-wax. Is it a man, or what is it?

What I had to tell, I have told. I have wrote it down. I hope it's plain. Not so much in the handwriting (though nothing to boast of there), as in the sense of it. I will now conclude with Thomas Joy. Thomas said to me, when we parted, "John, if the laws of this country were as honest as they ought to be, you would have come to

London—registered an exact description and drawing of your invention—paid half-a-crown or so for doing of it—and therein and thereby have got your Patent."

My opinion is the same as Thomas Joy. Further. In William Butcher's delivering "that the whole gang of Hanapers and Chaff-waxes must be done away with, and that England has been chaffed and waxed sufficient," I agree.

A CHRISTMAS TREE.

I HAVE been looking on, this evening, at a merry company of children assembled round that pretty German toy, a Christmas Tree. The tree was planted in the middle of a great round table, and towered high above their heads. It was brilliantly lighted by a multitude of little tapers; and everywhere sparkled and glittered with bright objects. There were rosy-cheeked dolls, hiding behind the green leaves; and there were real watches (with movable hands, at least, and an endless capacity of being wound up) dangling from innumerable twigs; there were French-polished tables, chairs, bedsteads, wardrobes, eight-day clocks, and various other articles of domestic furniture (wonderfully made, in tin, at Wolverhampton), perched among the boughs, as if in preparation for some fairy housekeeping; there were jolly, broad-faced little men, much more agreeable in appearance than many real men—and no wonder, for their heads took off, and showed them to be full of sugar-plums; there were fiddles and drums; there were tambourines, books, work-boxes, paint-boxes, sweetmeat-boxes, peep-show boxes, and all kinds of boxes; there were trinkets for the elder girls, far brighter than any grown-up gold and jewels; there were baskets and pincushions in all devices; there were guns, swords, and banners; there were witches standing in enchanted rings of pasteboard, to tell fortunes; there were teetotums, humming-tops, needle-cases, pen-wipers, smelling-bottles, conversation-cards, bouquet-holders; real fruit, made artificially dazzling with goldleaf; imitation apples, pears, and walnuts, crammed with surprises; in short, as a pretty child, before me, delightedly whispered to another pretty child, her bosom

friend, "There was everything, and more." This motley collection of odd objects, clustering on the tree like magic fruit, and flashing back the bright looks directed towards it from every side—some of the diamond-eyes admiring it were hardly on a level with the table, and a few were languishing in timid wonder on the bosoms of pretty mothers, aunts, and nurses—made a lively realisation of the fancies of childhood; and set me thinking how all the trees that grow and all the things that come into existence on the earth, have their wild adornments at that well-remembered time.

Being now at home again, and alone, the only person in the house awake, my thoughts are drawn back, by a fascination which I do not care to resist, to my own childhood. I begin to consider, what do we all remember best upon the branches of the Christmas Tree of our own young Christmas days, by which we climbed to real life.

Straight, in the middle of the room, cramped in the freedom of its growth by no encircling walls or soon-reached ceiling, a shadowy tree arises; and, looking up into the dreamy brightness of its top—for I observe in this tree the singular property that it appears to grow downward towards the earth—I look into my youngest Christmas recollections!

All toys at first, I find. Up yonder, among the green holly and red berries, is the Tumbler with his hands in his pockets, who wouldn't lie down, but whenever he was put upon the floor, persisted in rolling his fat body about, until he rolled himself still, and brought those lobster eyes of his to bear upon me—when I affected to laugh very much, but in my heart of hearts was extremely doubtful of him. Close beside him is that infernal snuff-box, out of which there sprang a demoniacal Counsellor in a black gown, with an obnoxious head of hair, and a red cloth mouth, wide open, who was not to be endured on any terms, but could not be put away either; for he used suddenly, in a highly magnified state, to fly out of Mammoth Snuff-boxes in dreams, when least expected. Nor is the frog with cobbler's wax on his tail, far off; for there was no knowing where he wouldn't jump; and when he flew over the candle, and came upon one's hand with that spotted back—red on a green ground—he was horrible. The cardboard lady in a blue-silk skirt, who was stood up

against the candlestick to dance, and whom I see on the same branch, was milder, and was beautiful; but I can't say as much for the larger cardboard man, who used to be hung against the wall and pulled by a string; there was a sinister expression in that nose of his; and when he got his legs round his neck (which he very often did), he was ghastly, and not a creature to be alone with.

When did that dreadful Mask first look at me? Who put it on, and why was I so frightened that the sight of it is an era in my life? It is not a hideous visage in itself; it is even meant to be droll; why then were its stolid features so intolerable? Surely not because it hid the wearer's face. An apron would have done as much; and though I should have preferred even the apron away, it would not have been absolutely insupportable, like the mask. Was it the immovability of the mask? The doll's face was immovable, but I was not afraid of *her*. Perhaps that fixed and set change coming over a real face, infused into my quickened heart some remote suggestion and dread of the universal change that is to come on every face, and make it still? Nothing reconciled me to it. No drummers, from whom proceeded a melancholy chirping on the turning of a handle; no regiment of soldiers, with a mute band, taken out of a box, and fitted, one by one, upon a stiff and lazy little set of lazy-tongs; no old woman, made of wires and a brown-paper composition, cutting up a pie for two small children; could give me a permanent comfort, for a long time. Nor was it any satisfaction to be shown the Mask, and see that it was made of paper, or to have it locked up and be assured that no one wore it. The mere recollection of that fixed face, the mere knowledge of its existence anywhere, was sufficient to awake me in the night all perspiration and horror, with, "O I know it's coming! O the mask!"

I never wondered what the dear old donkey with the panniers—there he is! was made of, then! His hide was real to the touch, I recollect. And the great black horse with the round red spots all over him—the horse that I could even get upon—I never wondered what had brought him to that strange condition, or thought that such a horse was not commonly seen at Newmarket. The four horses of no colour, next to him, that went into the waggon of cheeses, and could be taken out and stabled under the

piano, appear to have bits of fur-tippet for their tails, and other bits for their manes, and to stand on pegs instead of legs; but it was not so when they were brought home for a Christmas present. They were all right, then; neither was their harness unceremoniously nailed into their chests, as appears to be the case now. The tinkling works of the music-cart, I *did* find out, to be made of quill tooth-picks and wire; and I always thought that little tumbler in his shirt sleeves, perpetually swarming up one side of a wooden frame, and coming down, head foremost, on the other, rather a weak-minded person—though good-natured; but the Jacob's Ladder, next him, made of little squares of red wood, that went flapping and clattering over one another, each developing a different picture, and the whole enlivened by small bells, was a mighty marvel and a great delight.

Ah! The Doll's house!—of which I was not proprietor, but where I visited. I don't admire the Houses of Parliament half so much as that stone-fronted mansion with real glass windows, and door-steps, and a real balcony—greener than I ever see now, except at watering-places; and even they afford but a poor imitation. And though it *did* open all at once, the entire house-front (which was a blow, I admit, as cancelling the fiction of a staircase), it was but to shut it up again, and I could believe. Even open, there were three distinct rooms in it: a sitting-room and bed-room, elegantly furnished, and best of all, a kitchen, with uncommonly soft fire-irons, a plentiful assortment of diminutive utensils—oh, the warming-pan!—and a tin man-cook in profile, who was always going to fry two fish. What Barmecide justice have I done to the noble feasts wherein the set of wooden platters figured, each with its own peculiar delicacy, as a ham or turkey, glued tight on to it, and garnished with something green, which I recollect as moss! Could all the Temperance Societies of these later days, united, give me such a tea-drinking as I have had through the means of yonder little set of blue crockery, which really would hold liquid (it ran out of the small wooden cask, I recollect, and tasted of matches), and which made tea, nectar. And if the two legs of the ineffectual little sugar-tongs did tumble over one another, and want purpose, like Punch's hands, what does it matter? And if I did once shriek out, as a poisoned child, and strike the fashionable company with consternation, by

reason of having drunk a little teaspoon, inadvertently dissolved in too hot tea, I was never the worse for it, except by a powder!

Upon the next branches of the tree, lower down, hard by the green roller and miniature gardening-tools, how thick the books begin to hang. Thin books, in themselves, at first, but many of them, and with deliciously smooth covers of bright red or green. What fat black letters to begin with! "A was an archer, and shot at a frog." Of course he was. He was an apple-pie also, and there he is! He was a good many things in his time, was A, and so were most of his friends, except X, who had so little versatility, that I never knew him to get beyond Xerxes or Xantippe—like Y, who was always confined to a Yacht or a Yew Tree; and Z condemned for ever to be a Zebra or a Zany. But, now, the very tree itself changes, and becomes a bean-stalk—the marvellous bean-stalk up which Jack climbed to the Giant's house! And now, those dreadfully interesting, double-headed giants, with their clubs over their shoulders, begin to stride along the boughs in a perfect throng, dragging knights and ladies home for dinner by the hair of their heads. And Jack—how noble, with his sword of sharpness, and his shoes of swiftness! Again those old meditations come upon me as I gaze up at him; and I debate within myself whether there was more than one Jack (which I am loth to believe possible), or only one genuine original admirable Jack, who achieved all the recorded exploits.

Good for Christmas time is the ruddy colour of the cloak, in which—the tree making a forest of itself for her to trip through, with her basket—Little Red Riding-Hood comes to me one Christmas Eve to give me information of the cruelty and treachery of that dissembling Wolf who ate her grandmother, without making any impression on his appetite, and then ate her, after making that ferocious joke about his teeth. She was my first love. I felt that if I could have married Little Red Riding-Hood, I should have known perfect bliss. But, it was not to be; and there was nothing for it but to look out the Wolf in the Noah's Ark there, and put him late in the procession on the table, as a monster who was to be degraded. O the wonderful Noah's Ark! It was not found seaworthy when put in a washing-tub, and the animals were crammed in at the roof, and

needed to have their legs well shaken down before they could be got in, even there—and then, ten to one but they began to tumble out at the door, which was but imperfectly fastened with a wire latch—but what was *that* against it! Consider the noble fly, a size or two smaller than the elephant: the lady-bird, the butterfly—all triumphs of art! Consider the goose, whose feet were so small, and whose balance was so indifferent, that he usually tumbled forward, and knocked down all the animal creation. Consider Noah and his family, like idiotic tobacco-stoppers; and how the leopard stuck to warm little fingers; and how the tails of the larger animals used gradually to resolve themselves into frayed bits of string!

Hush! Again a forest, and somebody up in a tree—not Robin Hood, not Valentine, not the Yellow Dwarf (I have passed him and all Mother Bunch's wonders, without mention), but an Eastern King with a glittering scimitar and turban. By Allah! two Eastern Kings, for I see another, looking over his shoulder! Down upon the grass, at the tree's foot, lies the full length of a coal-black Giant, stretched asleep, with his head in a lady's lap; and near them is a glass box, fastened with four locks of shining steel, in which he keeps the lady prisoner when he is awake. I see the four keys at his girdle now. The lady makes signs to the two kings in the tree, who softly descend. It is the setting-in of the bright Arabian Nights.

Oh, now all common things become uncommon and enchanted to me. All lamps are wonderful; all rings are talismans. Common flower-pots are full of treasure, with a little earth scattered on the top; trees are for Ali Baba to hide in; beef-steaks are to throw down into the Valley of Diamonds, that the precious stones may stick to them, and be carried by the eagles to their nests, whence the traders, with loud cries, will scare them. Tarts are made, according to the recipe of the Vizier's son of Bussorah, who turned pastrycook after he was set down in his drawers at the gate of Damascus; cobblers are all Mustaphas, and in the habit of sewing up people cut into four pieces, to whom they are taken blindfold.

Any iron ring let into stone is the entrance to a cave which only waits for the magician, and the little fire, and the necromancy, that will make the earth shake. All the dates imported come from the same tree as that unlucky

date, with whose shell the merchant knocked out the eye of the genie's invisible son. All olives are of the stock of that fresh fruit, concerning which the Commander of the Faithful overheard the boy conduct the fictitious trial of the fraudulent olive merchant; all apples are akin to the apple purchased (with two others) from the Sultan's gardener for three sequins, and which the tall black slave stole from the child. All dogs are associated with the dog, really a transformed man, who jumped upon the baker's counter, and put his paw on the piece of bad money. All rice recalls the rice which the awful lady, who was a ghoul, could only peck by grains, because of her nightly feasts in the burial-place. My very rocking-horse,—there he is, with his nostrils turned completely inside-out, indicative of Blood!—should have a peg in his neck, by virtue thereof to fly away with me, as the wooden horse did with the Prince of Persia, in the sight of all his father's Court.

Yes, on every object that I recognise among those upper branches of my Christmas Tree, I see this fairy light! When I wake in bed, at daybreak, on the cold dark winter mornings, the white snow dimly beheld, outside, through the frost on the window-pane, I hear Dinarzade. "Sister, sister, if you are yet awake, I pray you finish the history of the Young King of the Black Islands." Scheherazade replies, "If my lord the Sultan will suffer me to live another day, sister, I will not only finish that, but tell you a more wonderful story yet." Then, the gracious Sultan goes out, giving no orders for the execution, and we all three breathe again.

At this height of my tree I begin to see, cowering among the leaves—it may be born of turkey, or of pudding, or mince-pie, or of these many fancies, jumbled with Robinson Crusoe on his desert island, Philip Quarll among the monkeys, Sandford and Merton with Mr. Barlow, Mother Bunch, and the Mask—or it may be the result of indigestion, assisted by imagination and over-doctoring—a prodigious nightmare. It is so exceedingly indistinct, that I don't know why it's frightful—but I know it is. I can only make out that it is an immense array of shapeless things, which appear to be planted on a vast exaggeration of the lazy-tongs that used to bear the toy soldiers, and to be slowly coming close to my eyes, and receding to an immeasurable distance. When it comes closest, it is worst.

In connection with it I descry remembrances of winter nights incredibly long; of being sent early to bed, as a punishment for some small offence, and waking in two hours, with a sensation of having been asleep two nights; of the laden hopelessness of morning ever dawning; and the oppression of a weight of remorse.

And now, I see a wonderful row of little lights rise smoothly out of the ground, before a vast green curtain. Now, a bell rings—a magic bell, which still sounds in my ears unlike all other bells—and music plays, amidst a buzz of voices, and a fragrant smell of orange-peel and oil. Anon, the magic bell commands the music to cease, and the great green curtain rolls itself up majestically, and The Play begins! The devoted dog of Montargis avenges the death of his master, foully murdered in the Forest of Bondy; and a humorous Peasant with a red nose and a very little hat, whom I take from this hour forth to my bosom as a friend (I think he was a Waiter or an Hostler at a village Inn, but many years have passed since he and I have met), remarks that the sassigassity of that dog is indeed surprising; and evermore this jocular conceit will live in my remembrance fresh and unfading, overtopping all possible jokes, unto the end of time. Or now, I learn with bitter tears how poor Jane Shore, dressed all in white, and with her brown hair hanging down, went starving through the streets; or how George Barnwell killed the worthiest uncle that ever man had, and was afterwards so sorry for it that he ought to have been let off. Comes swift to comfort me, the Pantomime—stupendous Phenomenon!—when clowns are shot from loaded mortars into the great chandelier, bright constellation that it is; when Harlequins, covered all over with scales of pure gold, twist and sparkle, like amazing fish; when Pantaloon (whom I deem it no irreverence to compare in my own mind to my grandfather) puts red-hot pokers in his pocket, and cries "Here's somebody coming!" or taxes the Clown with petty larceny, by saying, "Now, I sawed you do it!" when Everything is capable, with the greatest ease, of being changed into Anything; and "Nothing is, but thinking makes it so." Now, too, I perceive my first experience of the dreary sensation —often to return in after-life—of being unable, next day, to get back to the dull, settled world; of wanting to live for ever in the bright atmosphere I have quitted; of doting

on the little Fairy, with the wand like a celestial Barber's Pole, and pining for a Fairy immortality along with her. Ah, she comes back, in many shapes, as my eye wanders down the branches of my Christmas Tree, and goes as often, and has never yet stayed by me!

Out of this delight springs the toy-theatre,—there it is, with its familiar proscenium, and ladies in feathers, in the boxes!—and all its attendant occupation with paste and glue, and gum, and water colours, in the getting-up of The Miller and his Men, and Elizabeth, or the Exile of Siberia. In spite of a few besetting accidents and failures (particularly an unreasonable disposition in the respectable Kelmar, and some others, to become faint in the legs, and double up, at exciting points of the drama), a teeming world of fancies so suggestive and all-embracing, that, far below it on my Christmas Tree, I see dark, dirty, real Theatres in the day-time, adorned with these associations as with the freshest garlands of the rarest flowers, and charming me yet.

But hark! The Waits are playing, and they break my childish sleep! What images do I associate with the Christmas music as I see them set forth on the Christmas Tree? Known before all the others, keeping far apart from all the others, they gather round my little bed. An angel, speaking to a group of shepherds in a field; some travellers, with eyes uplifted, following a star; a baby in a manger; a child in a spacious temple, talking with grave men; a solemn figure, with a mild and beautiful face, raising a dead girl by the hand; again, near a city gate, calling back the son of a widow, on his bier, to life; a crowd of people looking through the opened roof of a chamber where he sits, and letting down a sick person on a bed, with ropes; the same, in a tempest, walking on the water to a ship; again, on a sea-shore, teaching a great multitude; again, with a child upon his knee, and other children round; again, restoring sight to the blind, speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf, health to the sick, strength to the lame, knowledge to the ignorant; again, dying upon a Cross, watched by armed soldiers, a thick darkness coming on, the earth beginning to shake, and only one voice heard, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Still, on the lower and maturer branches of the Tree, Christmas associations cluster thick. School-books shut

up; Ovid and Virgil silenced; the Rule of Three, with its cool impertinent inquiries, long disposed of; Terence and Plautus acted no more, in an arena of huddled desks and forms, all chipped, and notched, and inked; cricket-bats, stumps, and balls, left higher up, with the smell of trodden grass and the softened noise of shouts in the evening air; the tree is still fresh, still gay. If I no more come home at Christmas time, there will be boys and girls (thank Heaven!) while the World lasts; and they do! Yonder they dance and play upon the branches of my Tree, God bless them, merrily, and my heart dances and plays too!

And I *do* come home at Christmas. We all do, or we all should. We all come home, or ought to come home, for a short holiday—the longer, the better—from the great boarding-school, where we are for ever working at our arithmetical slates, to take, and give a rest. As to going a visiting, where can we not go, if we will; where have we not been, when we would; starting our fancy from our Christmas Tree!

Away into the winter prospect. There are many such upon the tree! On, by low-lying, misty grounds, through fens and fogs, up long hills, winding dark as caverns between thick plantations, almost shutting out the sparkling stars; so, out on broad heights, until we stop at last, with sudden silence, at an avenue. The gate-bell has a deep, half-awful sound in the frosty air; the gate swings open on its hinges; and, as we drive up to a great house, the glancing lights grow larger in the windows, and the opposing rows of trees seem to fall solemnly back on either side, to give us place. At intervals, all day, a frightened hare has shot across this whitened turf; or the distant clatter of a herd of deer trampling the hard frost, has, for the minute, crushed the silence too. Their watchful eyes beneath the fern may be shining now, if we could see them, like the icy dewdrops on the leaves; but they are still, and all is still. And so, the lights growing larger, and the trees falling back before us, and closing up again behind us, as if to forbid retreat, we come to the house.

There is probably a smell of roasted chestnuts and other good comfortable things all the time, for we are telling Winter Stories—Ghost Stories, or more shame for us—round the Christmas fire; and we have never stirred, except to draw a little nearer to it. But, no matter for that.

We came to the house, and it is an old house, full of great chimneys where wood is burnt on ancient dogs upon the hearth, and grim portraits (some of them with grim legends, too) lower distrustfully from the oaken panels of the walls. We are a middle-aged nobleman, and we make a generous supper with our host and hostess and their guests—it being Christmas time, and the old house full of company—and then we go to bed. Our room is a very old room. It is hung with tapestry. We don't like the portrait of a cavalier in green, over the fireplace. There are great black beams in the ceiling, and there is a great black bedstead, supported at the foot by two great black figures, who seem to have come off a couple of tombs in the old baronial church in the park, for our particular accommodation. But, we are not a superstitious nobleman, and we don't mind. Well! we dismiss our servant, lock the door, and sit before the fire in our dressing-gown, musing about a great many things. At length we go to bed. Well! we can't sleep. We toss and tumble, and can't sleep. The embers on the hearth burn fitfully and make the room look ghostly. We can't help peeping out over the counterpane, at the two black figures and the cavalier—that wicked-looking cavalier—in green. In the flickering light they seem to advance and retire: which, though we are not by any means a superstitious nobleman, is not agreeable. Well! we get nervous—more and more nervous. We say "This is very foolish, but we can't stand this; we'll pretend to be ill, and knock up somebody." Well! we are just going to do it, when the locked door opens, and there comes in a young woman, deadly pale, and with long fair hair, who glides to the fire, and sits down in the chair we have left there, wringing her hands. Then, we notice that her clothes are wet. Our tongue cleaves to the roof of our mouth, and we can't speak; but, we observe her accurately. Her clothes are wet; her long hair is dabbled with moist mud; she is dressed in the fashion of two hundred years ago; and she has at her girdle a bunch of rusty keys. Well! there she sits, and we can't even faint, we are in such a state about it. Presently she gets up, and tries all the locks in the room with the rusty keys, which won't fit one of them; then, she fixes her eyes on the portrait of the cavalier in green, and says, in a low, terrible voice, "The stags know it!" After that, she wrings her hands again,

passes the bedside, and goes out at the door. We hurry on our dressing-gown, seize our pistols (we always travel with pistols), and are following, when we find the door locked. We turn the key, look out into the dark gallery; no one there. We wander away, and try to find our servant. Can't be done. We pace the gallery till daybreak; then return to our deserted room, fall asleep, and are awakened by our servant (nothing ever haunts *him*) and the shining sun. Well! we make a wretched breakfast, and all the company say we look queer. After breakfast, we go over the house with our host, and then we take him to the portrait of the cavalier in green, and then it all comes out. He was false to a young housekeeper once attached to that family, and famous for her beauty, who drowned herself in a pond, and whose body was discovered, after a long time, because the stags refused to drink of the water. Since which, it has been whispered that she traverses the house at midnight (but goes especially to that room where the cavalier in green was wont to sleep), trying the old locks with the rusty keys. Well! we tell our host of what we have seen, and a shade comes over his features, and he begs it may be hushed up; and so it is. But, it's all true; and we said so, before we died (we are dead now), to many responsible people.

There is no end to the old houses, with resounding galleries, and dismal state-bedchambers, and haunted wings shut up for many years, through which we may ramble, with an agreeable creeping up our back, and encounter any number of ghosts, but (it is worthy of remark perhaps) reducible to a very few general types and classes; for, ghosts have little originality, and "walk" in a beaten track. Thus, it comes to pass, that a certain room in a certain old hall, where a certain bad lord, baronet, knight, or gentleman, shot himself, has certain planks in the floor from which the blood *will not* be taken out. You may scrape and scrape, as the present owner has done, or plane and plane, as his father did, or scrub and scrub, as his grandfather did, or burn and burn with strong acids, as his great-grandfather did, but, there the blood will still be—no redder and no paler—no more and no less—always just the same. Thus, in such another house there is a haunted door, that never will keep open; or another door that never will keep shut; or a haunted sound of a spinning-wheel, or

a hammer, or a footstep, or a cry, or a sigh, or a horse's tramp, or the rattling of a chain. Or else, there is a turret-clock, which, at the midnight hour, strikes thirteen when the head of the family is going to die; or a shadowy, immovable black carriage which at such a time is always seen by somebody, waiting near the great gates in the stable-yard. Or thus, it came to pass how Lady Mary went to pay a visit at a large wild house in the Scottish Highlands, and, being fatigued with her long journey, retired to bed early, and innocently said, next morning, at the breakfast-table, "How odd, to have so late a party last night, in this remote place, and not to tell me of it, before I went to bed!" Then, every one asked Lady Mary what she meant? Then, Lady Mary replied, "Why, all night long, the carriages were driving round and round the terrace, underneath my window!" Then, the owner of the house turned pale, and so did his Lady, and Charles Macdoodle of Macdoodle signed to Lady Mary to say no more, and every one was silent. After breakfast, Charles Macdoodle told Lady Mary that it was a tradition in the family that those rumbling carriages on the terrace betokened death. And so it proved, for, two months afterwards, the Lady of the mansion died. And Lady Mary, who was a Maid of Honour at Court, often told this story to the old Queen Charlotte; by this token that the old King always said, "Eh, eh? What, what? Ghosts, ghosts? No such thing, no such thing!" And never left off saying so, until he went to bed.

Or, a friend of somebody's whom most of us know, when he was a young man at college, had a particular friend, with whom he made the compact that, if it were possible for the Spirit to return to this earth after its separation from the body, he of the twain who first died, should reappear to the other. In course of time, this compact was forgotten by our friend; the two young men having progressed in life, and taken diverging paths that were wide asunder. But, one night, many years afterwards, our friend being in the North of England, and staying for the night in an inn, on the Yorkshire Moors, happened to look out of bed; and there, in the moonlight, leaning on a bureau near the window, steadfastly regarding him, saw his old college friend! The appearance being solemnly addressed, replied, in a kind of whisper, but very audibly,

"Do not come near me. I am dead. I am here to redeem my promise. I came from another world, but may not disclose its secrets!" Then, the whole form becoming paler, melted, as it were, into the moonlight, and faded away.

Or, there was the daughter of the first occupier of the picturesque Elizabethan house, so famous in our neighbourhood. You have heard about her? No! Why, *She* went out one summer evening at twilight, when she was a beautiful girl, just seventeen years of age, to gather flowers in the garden; and presently came running, terrified, into the hall to her father, saying, "Oh, dear father, I have met myself!" He took her in his arms, and told her it was fancy, but she said, "Oh no! I met myself in the broad walk, and I was pale and gathering withered flowers, and I turned my head, and held them up!" And, that night, she died; and a picture of her story was begun, though never finished, and they say it is somewhere in the house to this day, with its face to the wall.

Or, the uncle of my brother's wife was riding home on horseback, one mellow evening at sunset, when, in a green lane close to his own house, he saw a man standing before him, in the very centre of the narrow way. "Why does that man in the cloak stand there!" he thought. "Does he want me to ride over him?" But the figure never moved. He felt a strange sensation at seeing it so still, but slackened his trot and rode forward. When he was so close to it, as almost to touch it with his stirrup, his horse shied, and the figure glided up the bank, in a curious, unearthly manner—backward, and without seeming to use its feet—and was gone. The uncle of my brother's wife, exclaiming, "Good Heaven! It's my cousin Harry, from Bombay!" put spurs to his horse, which was suddenly in a profuse sweat, and, wondering at such strange behaviour, dashed round to the front of his house. There, he saw the same figure, just passing in at the long French window of the drawing-room, opening on the ground. He threw his bridle to a servant, and hastened in after it. His sister was sitting there, alone. "Alice, where's my cousin Harry?" "Your cousin Harry, John?" "Yes. From Bombay. I met him in the lane just now, and saw him enter here, this instant." Not a creature had been seen by any one; and in that hour and minute, as it afterwards appeared, this cousin died in India.

Or, it was a certain sensible old maiden lady, who died at ninety-nine, and retained her faculties to the last, who really did see the Orphan Boy; a story which has often been incorrectly told, but, of which the real truth is this—because it is, in fact, a story belonging to our family—and she was a connection of our family. When she was about forty years of age, and still an uncommonly fine woman (her lover died young, which was the reason why she never married, though she had many offers), she went to stay at a place in Kent, which her brother, an Indian-Merchant, had newly bought. There was a story that this place had once been held in trust, by the guardian of a young boy; who was himself the next heir, and who killed the young boy by harsh and cruel treatment. She knew nothing of that. It has been said that there was a Cage in her bedroom in which the guardian used to put the boy. There was no such thing. There was only a closet. She went to bed, made no alarm whatever in the night, and in the morning said composedly to her maid when she came in, "Who is the pretty forlorn-looking child who has been peeping out of that closet all night?" The maid replied by giving a loud scream, and instantly decamping. She was surprised; but she was a woman of remarkable strength of mind, and she dressed herself and went downstairs, and closeted herself with her brother. "Now, Walter," she said, "I have been disturbed all night by a pretty, forlorn-looking boy, who has been constantly peeping out of that closet in my room, which I can't open. This is some trick." "I am afraid not, Charlotte," said he, "for it is the legend of the house. It is the Orphan Boy. What did he do?" "He opened the door softly," said she, "and peeped out. Sometimes, he came a step or two into the room. Then, I called to him, to encourage him, and he shrunk, and shuddered, and crept in again, and shut the door." "The closet has no communication, Charlotte," said her brother, "with any other part of the house, and it's nailed up." This was undeniably true, and it took two carpenters a whole forenoon to get it open, for examination. Then, she was satisfied that she had seen the Orphan Boy. But, the wild and terrible part of the story is, that he was also seen by three of her brother's sons, in succession, who all died young. On the occasion of each child being taken ill, he came home in a heat,

twelve hours before, and said, Oh, Mamma, he had been playing under a particular oak-tree, in a certain meadow, with a strange boy—a pretty, forlorn-looking boy, who was very timid, and made signs! From fatal experience, the parents came to know that this was the Orphan Boy, and that the course of that child whom he chose for his little playmate was surely run.

Legion is the name of the German castles, where we sit up alone to wait for the Spectre—where we are shown into a room, made comparatively cheerful for our reception—where we glance round at the shadows, thrown on the blank walls by the crackling fire—where we feel very lonely when the village innkeeper and his pretty daughter have retired, after laying down a fresh store of wood upon the hearth, and setting forth on the small table such supper-cheer as a cold roast capon, bread, grapes, and a flask of old Rhine wine—where the reverberating doors close on their retreat, one after another, like so many peals of sullen thunder—and where, about the small hours of the night, we come into the knowledge of divers supernatural mysteries. Legion is the name of the haunted German students, in whose society we draw yet nearer to the fire, while the schoolboy in the corner opens his eyes wide and round, and flies off the footstool he has chosen for his seat, when the door accidentally blows open. Vast is the crop of such fruit, shining on our Christmas Tree; in blossom, almost at the very top; ripening all down the boughs!

Among the later toys and fancies hanging there—as idle often and less pure—be the images once associated with the sweet old Waits, the softened music in the night, ever unalterable! Encircled by the social thoughts of Christmas time, still let the benignant figure of my childhood stand unchanged! In every cheerful image and suggestion that the season brings, may the bright star that rested above the poor roof, be the star of all the Christian World! A moment's pause, O vanishing tree, of which the lower boughs are dark to me as yet, and let me look once more! I know there are blank spaces on thy branches, where eyes that I have loved, have shone and smiled; from which they are departed. But, far above, I see the raiser of the dead girl, and the Widow's Son; and God is good! If Age be hiding for me in the unseen portion of thy downward growth, O may I, with a grey head, turn a child's

heart to that figure yet, and a child's trustfulness and confidence!

Now, the tree is decorated with bright merriment, and song, and dance, and cheerfulness. And they are welcome. Innocent and welcome be they ever held, beneath the branches of the Christmas Tree, which cast no gloomy shadow! But, as it sinks into the ground, I hear a whisper going through the leaves. "This, in commemoration of the law of love and kindness, mercy, and compassion. This, in remembrance of Me!"

"BIRTHS. MRS. MEEK, OF A SON."

My name is Meek. I am, in fact, Mr. Meek. That son is mine and Mrs. Meek's. When I saw the announcement in the Times, I dropped the paper. I had put it in, myself, and paid for it, but it looked so noble that it overpowered me.

As soon as I could compose my feelings, I took the paper up to Mrs. Meek's bedside. "Maria Jane," said I (I allude to Mrs. Meek), "you are now a public character." We read the review of our child, several times, with feelings of the strongest emotion; and I sent the boy who cleans the boots and shoes, to the office for fifteen copies. No reduction was made on taking that quantity.

It is scarcely necessary for me to say, that our child had been expected. In fact, it had been expected, with comparative confidence, for some months. Mrs. Meek's mother, who resides with us—of the name of Bigby—had made every preparation for its admission to our circle.

I hope and believe I am a quiet man. I will go farther. I *know* I am a quiet man. My constitution is tremulous, my voice was never loud, and, in point of stature, I have been from infancy, small. I have the greatest respect for Maria Jane's Mama. She is a most remarkable woman. I honour Maria Jane's Mama. In my opinion she would storm a town, single-handed, with a hearth-broom, and carry it. I have never known her to yield any point whatever, to mortal man. She is calculated to terrify the stoutest heart.

Still—but I will not anticipate.

The first intimation I had, of any preparations being in progress, on the part of Maria Jane's Mama, was one afternoon, several months ago. I came home earlier than usual from the office, and, proceeding into the dining-room, found an obstruction behind the door, which prevented it from opening freely. It was an obstruction of a soft nature. On looking in, I found it to be a female.

The female in question stood in the corner behind the door, consuming Sherry Wine. From the nutty smell of that beverage pervading the apartment, I have no doubt she was consuming a second glassful. She wore a black bonnet of large dimensions, and was copious in figure. The expression of her countenance was severe and discontented. The words to which she gave utterance on seeing me, were these, "Oh git along with you, Sir, if *you* please; me and Mrs. Bigby don't want no male parties here!"

That female was Mrs. Prodgit.

I immediately withdrew, of course. I was rather hurt, but I made no remark. Whether it was that I showed a lowness of spirits after dinner, in consequence of feeling that I seemed to intrude, I cannot say. But, Maria Jane's Mama said to me on her retiring for the night: in a low distinct voice, and with a look of reproach that completely subdued me: "George Meek, Mrs. Prodgit is your wife's nurse!"

I bear no ill-will towards Mrs. Prodgit. Is it likely that I, writing this with tears in my eyes, should be capable of deliberate animosity towards a female, so essential to the welfare of Maria Jane? I am willing to admit that Fate may have been to blame, and not Mrs. Prodgit; but, it is undeniably true, that the latter female brought desolation and devastation into my lowly dwelling.

We were happy after her first appearance; we were sometimes exceedingly so. But, whenever the parlour door was opened, and "Mrs. Prodgit!" announced (and she was very often announced), misery ensued. I could not bear Mrs. Prodgit's look. I felt that I was far from wanted, and had no business to exist in Mrs. Prodgit's presence. Between Maria Jane's Mama, and Mrs. Prodgit, there was a dreadful, secret, understanding—a dark mystery and conspiracy, pointing me out as a being to be shunned. I appeared to have done something that was evil. When-

ever Mrs. Prodgit called, after dinner, I retired to my dressing-room—where the temperature is very low, indeed, in the wintry time of the year—and sat looking at my frosty breath as it rose before me, and at my rack of boots; a serviceable article of furniture, but never, in my opinion, an exhilarating object. The length of the councils that were held with Mrs. Prodgit, under these circumstances, I will not attempt to describe. I will merely remark, that Mrs. Prodgit always consumed Sherry Wine while the deliberations were in progress; that they always ended in Maria Jane's being in wretched spirits on the sofa; and that Maria Jane's Mama always received me, when I was recalled, with a look of desolate triumph that too plainly said, "*Now*, George Meek! You see my child, Maria Jane, a ruin, and I hope you are satisfied!"

I pass, generally, over the period that intervened between the day when Mrs. Prodgit entered her protest against male parties, and the ever-memorable midnight when I brought her to my unobtrusive home in a cab, with an extremely large box on the roof, and a bundle, a bandbox, and a basket, between the driver's legs. I have no objection to Mrs. Prodgit (aided and abetted by Mrs. Bigby, who I never can forget is the parent of Maria Jane) taking entire possession of my unassuming establishment. In the recesses of my own breast, the thought may linger that a man in possession cannot be so dreadful as a woman, and that woman Mrs. Prodgit; but, I ought to bear a good deal, and I hope I can, and do. Huffing and snubbing, prey upon my feelings; but, I can bear them without complaint. They may tell in the long run; I may be hustled about, from post to pillar, beyond my strength; nevertheless, I wish to avoid giving rise to words in the family.

The voice of Nature, however, cries aloud in behalf of Augustus George, my infant son. It is for him that I wish to utter a few plaintive household words. I am not at all angry; I am mild—but miserable.

I wish to know why, when my child, Augustus George, was expected in our circle, a provision of pins was made, as if the little stranger were a criminal who was to be put to the torture immediately on his arrival, instead of a holy babe? I wish to know why haste was made to stick those pins all over his innocent form, in every direction? I wish to be informed why light and air are excluded from Augus-

tus George, like poisons? Why, I ask, is my unoffending infant so hedged into a basket-bedstead, with dimity and calico, with miniature sheets and blankets, that I can only hear him snuffle (and no wonder!) deep down under the pink hood of a little bathing-machine, and can never peruse even so much of his lineaments as his nose.

Was I expected to be the father of a French Roll, that the brushes of All Nations were laid in, to rasp Augustus George? Am I to be told that his sensitive skin was ever intended by Nature to have rashes brought out upon it, by the premature and incessant use of those formidable little instruments?

Is my son a Nutmeg, that he is to be grated on the stiff edges of sharp frills? Am I the parent of a Muslin boy, that his yielding surface is to be crimped and small plaited? Or is my child composed of Paper or of Linen, that impressions of the finer getting-up art, practised by the laundress, are to be printed off, all over his soft arms and legs, as I constantly observe them? The starch enters his soul; who can wonder that he cries?

Was Augustus George intended to have limbs, or to be born a Torso? I presume that limbs were the intention, as they are the usual practice. Then, why are my poor child's limbs fettered and tied up? Am I to be told that there is any analogy between Augustus George Meek and Jack Sheppard?

Analyse Castor Oil at any Institution of Chemistry that may be agreed upon, and inform me what resemblance, in taste, it bears to that natural provision which it is at once the pride and duty of Maria Jane, to administer to Augustus George! Yet, I charge Mrs. Prodgit (aided and abetted by Mrs. Bigby) with systematically forcing Castor Oil on my innocent son, from the first hour of his birth. When that medicine, in its efficient action, causes internal disturbance to Augustus George, I charge Mrs. Prodgit (aided and abetted by Mrs. Bigby) with insanely and inconsistently administering opium to allay the storm she has raised! What is the meaning of this?

If the days of Egyptian Mummies are past, how dare Mrs. Prodgit require, for the use of my son, an amount of flannel and linen that would carpet my humble roof? Do I wonder that she requires it? No! This morning, within an hour, I beheld this agonising sight. I beheld my son—

Augustus George—in Mrs. Prodgit's hands, and on Mrs. Prodgit's knee, being dressed. He was at the moment, comparatively speaking, in a state of nature; having nothing on, but an extremely short shirt, remarkably disproportionate to the length of his usual outer garments. Trailing from Mrs. Prodgit's lap, on the floor, was a long narrow roller or bandage—I should say of several yards in extent. In this, I SAW Mrs. Prodgit tightly roll the body of my unoffending infant, turning him over and over, now presenting his unconscious face upwards, now the back of his bald head, until the unnatural feat was accomplished, and the bandage secured by a pin, which I have every reason to believe entered the body of my only child. In this tourniquet, he passes the present phase of his existence. Can I know it, and smile!

I fear I have been betrayed into expressing myself warmly, but I feel deeply. Not for myself; for Augustus George. I dare not interfere. Will any one? Will any publication? Any doctor? Any parent? Any body? I do not complain that Mrs. Prodgit (aided and abetted by Mrs. Bigby) entirely alienates Maria Jane's affections from me, and interposes an impassable barrier between us. I do not complain of being made of no account. I do not want to be of any account. But, Augustus George is a production of Nature (I cannot think otherwise), and I claim that he should be treated with some remote reference to Nature. In my opinion, Mrs. Prodgit is, from first to last, a convention and a superstition. Are all the faculty afraid of Mrs. Prodgit? If not, why don't they take her in hand and improve her?

P.S. Maria Jane's Mama boasts of her own knowledge of the subject, and says she brought up seven children besides Maria Jane. But how do *I* know that she might not have brought them up much better? Maria Jane herself is far from strong, and is subject to headaches, and nervous indigestion. Besides which, I learn from the statistical tables that one child in five dies within the first year of its life; and one child in three, within the fifth. That don't look as if we could never improve in these particulars, I think!

P.P.S. Augustus George is in convulsions.

A MONUMENT OF FRENCH FOLLY.

It was profoundly observed by a witty member of the Court of Common Council, in Council assembled in the City of London, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, that the French are a frog-eating people, who wear wooden shoes.

We are credibly informed, in reference to the nation whom this choice spirit so happily disposed of, that the caricatures and stage representations which were current in England some half a century ago, exactly depict their present condition. For example, we understand that every Frenchman, without exception, wears a pigtail and curl-papers. That he is extremely sallow, thin, long-faced, and lantern-jawed. That the calves of his legs are invariably undeveloped; that his legs fail at the knees, and that his shoulders are always higher than his ears. We are likewise assured that he rarely tastes any food but soup maigre, and an onion; that he always says, "By Gar! Aha! Vat you tell me, sare?" at the end of every sentence he utters; and that the true generic name of his race is the Mounseers, or the Parly-voos. If he be not a dancing-master or a barber, he must be a cook; since no other trades but those three are congenial to the tastes of the people, or permitted by the Institutions of the country. He is a slave, of course. The ladies of France (who are also slaves) invariably have their heads tied up in Belcher handkerchiefs, wear long earrings, carry tambourines, and beguile the weariness of their yoke by singing in head voices through their noses—principally to barrel-organs.

It may be generally summed up, of this inferior people, that they have no idea of anything.

Of a great Institution like Smithfield, they are unable to form the least conception. A Beast Market in the heart of Paris would be regarded an impossible nuisance. Nor have they any notion of slaughter-houses in the midst of a city. One of these benighted frog-eaters would scarcely understand your meaning, if you told him of the existence of such a British bulwark.

It is agreeable, and perhaps pardonable, to indulge in a

little self-complacency when our right to it is thoroughly established. At the present time, to be rendered memorable by a final attack on that good old market which is the (rotten) apple of the Corporation's eye, let us compare ourselves, to our national delight and pride as to these two subjects of slaughter-house and beast-market, with the outlandish foreigner.

The blessings of Smithfield are too well understood to need recapitulation; all who run (away from mad bulls and pursuing oxen) may read. Any market-day they may be beheld in glorious action. Possibly the merits of our slaughter-houses are not yet quite so generally appreciated.

Slaughter-houses, in the large towns of England, are always (with the exception of one or two enterprising towns) most numerous in the most densely crowded places, where there is the least circulation of air. They are often underground, in cellars; they are sometimes in close back yards; sometimes (as in Spitalfields) in the very shops where the meat is sold. Occasionally, under good private management, they are ventilated and clean. For the most part, they are unventilated and dirty; and, to the reeking walls, putrid fat and other offensive animal matter clings with a tenacious hold. The busiest slaughter-houses in London are in the neighbourhood of Smithfield, in Newgate Market, in Whitechapel, in Newport Market, in Leadenhall Market, in Clare Market. All these places are surrounded by houses of a poor description, swarming with inhabitants. Some of them are close to the worst burial-grounds in London. When the slaughter-house is below the ground, it is a common practice to throw the sheep down areas, neck and crop—which is exciting, but not at all cruel. When it is on the level surface, it is often extremely difficult of approach. Then, the beasts have to be worried, and goaded, and pronged, and tail-twisted, for a long time before they can be got in—which is entirely owing to their natural obstinacy. When it is not difficult of approach, but is in a foul condition, what they see and scent makes them still more reluctant to enter—which is their natural obstinacy again. When they do get in at last, after no trouble and suffering to speak of (for, there is nothing in the previous journey into the heart of London, the night's endurance in Smithfield, the struggle out again, among the crowded

multitude, the coaches, carts, waggons, omnibuses, gigs, chaises, phaetons, cabs, trucks, dogs, boys, whoopings, roarings, and ten thousand other distractions), they are represented to be in a most unfit state to be killed, according to microscopic examinations made of their fevered blood by one of the most distinguished physiologists in the world, PROFESSOR OWEN—but that's humbug. When they *are* killed, at last, their reeking carcases are hung in impure air, to become, as the same Professor will explain to you, less nutritious and more unwholesome—but he is only an *un*common counsellor, so don't mind *him*. In half a quarter of a mile's length of Whitechapel, at one time, there shall be six hundred newly slaughtered oxen hanging up, and seven hundred sheep—but, the more the merrier—proof of prosperity. Hard by Snow Hill and Warwick Lane, you shall see the little children, inured to sights of brutality from their birth, trotting along the alleys, mingled with troops of horribly busy pigs, up to their ankles in blood—but it makes the young rascals hardy. Into the imperfect sewers of this overgrown city, you shall have the immense mass of corruption, engendered by these practices, lazily thrown out of sight, to rise, in poisonous gases, into your house at night, when your sleeping children will most readily absorb them, and to find its languid way, at last, into the river that you drink—but, the French are a frog-eating people who wear wooden shoes, and it's O the roast beef of England, my boy, the jolly old English roast beef.

It is quite a mistake—a new-fangled notion altogether—to suppose that there is any natural antagonism between putrefaction and health. They know better than that, in the Common Council. You may talk about Nature, in her wisdom, always warning man through his sense of smell, when he draws near to something dangerous; but, that won't go down in the City. Nature very often don't mean anything. Mrs. Quickly says that prunes are ill for a green wound; but whosoever says that putrid animal substances are ill for a green wound, or for robust vigour, or for anything or for any body, is a humanity-monger and a humbug. Britons never, never, never, &c., therefore. And prosperity to cattle-driving, cattle-slaughtering, bone-crushing, blood-boiling, trotter-scraping, tripe-dressing, paunch-cleaning, gut-spinning, hide-preparing, tallow-

melting, and other salubrious proceedings, in the midst of hospitals, churchyards, workhouses, schools, infirmaries, refuges, dwellings, provision-shops, nurseries, sick-beds, every stage and baiting-place in the journey from birth to death!

These *un*common counsellors, your Professor Owens and fellows, will contend that to tolerate these things in a civilised city, is to reduce it to a worse condition than BRUCE found to prevail in ABYSSINIA. For there (say they) the jackals and wild dogs came at night to devour the offal; whereas, here there are no such natural scavengers, and quite as savage customs. Further, they will demonstrate that nothing in Nature is intended to be wasted, and that besides the waste which such abuses occasion in the articles of health and life—main sources of the riches of any community—they lead to a prodigious waste of changing matters, which might, with proper preparation, and under scientific direction, be safely applied to the increase of the fertility of the land. Thus (they argue) does Nature ever avenge infractions of her beneficent laws, and so surely as Man is determined to warp any of her blessings into curses, shall they become curses, and shall he suffer heavily. But, this is cant. Just as it is cant of the worst description to say to the London Corporation, "How can you exhibit to the people so plain a spectacle of dishonest equivocation, as to claim the right of holding a market in the midst of the great city, for one of your vested privileges, when you know that when your last market holding charter was granted to you by King Charles the First, Smithfield stood IN THE SUBURBS OF LONDON, and is in that very charter so described in those five words?"—which is certainly true, but has nothing to do with the question.

Now to the comparison, in these particulars of civilisation, between the capital of England, and the capital of that frog-eating and wooden-shoe wearing country, which the illustrious Common Councilman so sarcastically settled.

In Paris, there is no Cattle Market. Cows and calves are sold within the city, but, the Cattle Markets are at Poissy, about thirteen miles off, on a line of railway; and at Sceaux, about five miles off. The Poissy market is held every Thursday; the Sceaux market, every Monday. In Paris, there are no slaughter-houses, in our acceptation of the term. There are five public Abattoirs—within the

walls, though in the suburbs—and in these all the slaughtering for the city must be performed. They are managed by a Syndicate or Guild of Butchers, who confer with the Minister of the Interior on all matters affecting the trade, and who are consulted when any new regulations are contemplated for its government. They are, likewise, under the vigilant superintendence of the police. Every butcher must be licensed: which proves him at once to be a slave, for we don't license butchers in England—we only license apothecaries, attorneys, post-masters, publicans, hawkers, retailers of tobacco, snuff, pepper, and vinegar—and one or two other little trades, not worth mentioning. Every arrangement in connection wiith the slaughtering and sale of meat, is matter of strict police regulation. (Slavery again, though we certainly have a general sort of Police Act here.)

But, in order that the reader may understand what a monument of folly these frog-eaters have raised in their abattoirs and cattle-markets, and may compare it with what common counselling has done for us all these years, and would still do but for the innovating spirit of the times, here follows a short account of a recent visit to these places:

It was as sharp a February morning as you would desire to feel at your fingers' ends when I turned out—tumbling over a chiffonier with his little basket and rake, who was picking up the bits of coloured paper that had been swept out, over-night, from a Bon-Bon shop—to take the Butchers' Train to Poissy. A cold, dim light just touched the high roofs of the Tuileries which have seen such changes, such distracted crowds, such riot and bloodshed; and they looked as calm, and as old, all covered with white frost, as the very Pyramids. There was not light enough, yet, to strike upon the towers of Notre Dame across the water; but I thought of the dark pavement of the old Cathedral as just beginning to be streaked with grey; and of the lamps in the "House of God," the Hospital close to it, burning low and being quenched; and of the keeper of the Morgue going about with a fading lantern, busy in the arrangement of his terrible waxwork for another sunny day.

The sun was up, and shining merrily when the butchers and I announcing our departure with an engine shriek to sleepy Paris, rattled away for the Cattle Market. Across the country, over the Seine, among a forest of scrubby trees—the hoar frost lying cold in shady places, and glit-

tering in the light—and here we are at Poissy! Out leap the butchers, who have been chattering all the way like madmen, and off they straggle for the Cattle Market (still chattering, of course, incessantly), in hats and caps of all shapes, in coats and blouses, in calf-skins, cow-skins, horse-skins, furs, shaggy mantles, hairy coats, sacking, baize, oil-skin, anything you please that will keep a man and a butcher warm, upon a frosty morning.

Many a French town have I seen, between this spot of ground and Strasburg or Marseilles, that might sit for your picture, little Poissy! Barring the details of your old church, I know you well, albeit we make acquaintance, now, for the first time. I know your narrow, straggling, winding streets, with a kennel in the midst, and lamps slung across. I know your picturesque street-corners, winding up-hill Heaven knows why or where! I know your tradesmen's inscriptions, in letters not quite fat enough; your barbers' brazen basins dangling over little shops; your Cafés and Estaminets, with cloudy bottles of stale syrup in the windows, and pictures of crossed billiard-cues outside. I know this identical grey horse with his tail rolled up in a knot like the "back hair" of an untidy woman, who won't be shod, and who makes himself heraldic by clattering across the street on his hind legs, while twenty voices shriek and growl at him as a Brigand, an accursed Robber, and an everlastingly-doomed Pig. I know your sparkling town-fountain, too, my Poissy, and am glad to see it near a cattle-market, gushing so freshly, under the auspices of a gallant little sublimated Frenchman wrought in metal, perched upon the top. Through all the land of France I know this unswept room at The Glory, with its peculiar smell of beans and coffee, where the butchers crowd about the stove, drinking the thinnest of wine from the smallest of tumblers; where the thickest of coffee-cups mingle with the longest of loaves, and the weakest of lump sugar; where Madame at the counter easily acknowledges the homage of all entering and departing butchers; where the billiard-table is covered up in the midst like a great bird-cage—but the bird may sing by-and-bye!

A bell! The Calf Market! Polite departure of butchers. Hasty payment and departure on the part of amateur Visitor. Madame reproaches Ma'amselle for too fine a susceptibility in reference to the devotion of a Butcher in a

bear-skin. Monsieur, the landlord of The Glory, counts a double handful of sous, without an unobliterated inscription, or an undamaged crowned head, among them.

There is little noise without, abundant space, and no confusion. The open area devoted to the market is divided into three portions: the Calf Market, the Cattle Market, the Sheep Market. Calves at eight, cattle at ten, sheep at mid-day. All is very clean.

The Calf Market is a raised platform of stone, some three or four feet high, open on all sides, with a lofty overspreading roof, supported on stone columns, which give it the appearance of a sort of vineyard from Northern Italy. Here, on the raised pavement, lie innumerable calves, all bound hind-legs and fore-legs together, and all trembling violently—perhaps with cold, perhaps with fear, perhaps with pain; for, this mode of tying, which seems to be an absolute superstition with the peasantry, can hardly fail to cause great suffering. Here they lie, patiently in rows, among the straw, with their stolid faces and inexpressive eyes, superintended by men and women, boys and girls; here they are inspected by our friends, the butchers, bargained for, and bought. Plenty of time; plenty of room; plenty of good humour. "Monsieur François in the bear-skin, how do you do, my friend? You come from Paris by the train? The fresh air does you good. If you are in want of three or four fine calves this market morning, my angel, I, Madame Doche, shall be happy to deal with you. Behold these calves, Monsieur François! Great Heaven, you are doubtful! Well, sir, walk round and look about you. If you find better for the money, buy them. If not, come to me!" Monsieur François goes his way leisurely, and keeps a wary eye upon the stock. No other butcher jostles Monsieur François; Monsieur François jostles no other butcher. Nobody is flustered and aggravated. Nobody is savage. In the midst of the country blue frocks and red handkerchiefs, and the butchers' coats, shaggy, furry, and hairy: of calf-skin, cow-skin, horse-skin, and bear-skin: towers a cocked hat and a blue cloak. Slavery! For *our* Police wear great-coats and glazed hats.

But now the bartering is over, and the calves are sold. "Ho! Gregoire, Antoine, Jean, Louis! Bring up the carts, my children! Quick, brave infants! Hola! Hi!"

The carts, well littered with straw, are backed up to the

edge of the raised pavement, and various hot infants carry calves upon their heads, and dexterously pitch them in, while other hot infants, standing in the carts, arrange the calves, and pack them carefully in straw. Here is a promising young calf, not sold, whom Madame Doche unbinds. Pardon me, Madame Doche, but I fear this mode of tying the four legs of a quadruped together, though strictly *à la* mode, is not quite right. You observe, Madame Doche, that the cord leaves deep indentations in the skin, and that the animal is so cramped at first as not to know, or even remotely suspect that he *is* unbound, until you are so obliging as to kick him, in your delicate little way, and pull his tail like a bell-rope. Then, he staggers to his knees, not being able to stand, and stumbles about like a drunken calf, or the horse at Franconi's, whom you may have seen, Madame Doche, who is supposed to have been mortally wounded in battle. But, what is this rubbing against me, as I apostrophise Madame Doche? It is another heated infant with a calf upon his head. "Pardon, Monsieur, but will you have the politeness to allow me to pass?" "Ah, sir, willingly. I am vexed to obstruct the way." On he staggers, calf and all, and makes no allusion whatever either to my eyes or limbs.

Now, the carts are all full. More straw, my Antoine, to shake over these top rows; then, off we will clatter, rumble, jolt, and rattle, a long row of us, out of the first town-gate, and out at the second town-gate, and past the empty sentry-box, and the little thin square bandbox of a guardhouse, where nobody seems to live; and away for Paris, by the paved road, lying, a straight straight line, in the long long avenue of trees. We can neither choose our road, nor our pace, for that is all prescribed to us. The public convenience demands that our carts should get to Paris by such a route, and no other (Napoleon had leisure to find that out, while he had a little war with the world upon his hands), and woe betide us if we infringe orders.

Droves of oxen stand in the Cattle Market, tied to iron bars fixed into posts of granite. Other droves advance slowly down the long avenue, past the second town-gate, and the first town-gate, and the sentry-box, and the bandbox, thawing the morning with their smoky breath as they come along. Plenty of room; plenty of time. Neither man nor beast is driven out of his wits by coaches, carts,

waggons, omnibuses, gigs, chaises, phaetons, cabs, trucks, boys, whoopings, roarings, and multitudes. No tail-twisting is necessary—no iron pronging is necessary. There are no iron prongs here. The market for cattle is held as quietly as the market for calves. In due time, off the cattle go to Paris; the drovers can no more choose their road, nor their time, nor the numbers they shall drive, than they can choose their hour for dying in the course of nature.

Sheep next. The sheep-pens are up here, past the Branch Bank of Paris established for the convenience of the butchers, and behind the two pretty fountains they are making in the Market. My name is Bull: yet I think I should like to see as good twin fountains—not to say in Smithfield, but in England anywhere. Plenty of room; plenty of time. And here are sheep-dogs, sensible as ever, but with a certain French air about them—not without a suspicion of dominoes—with a kind of flavour of moustache and beard—demonstrative dogs, shaggy and loose where an English dog would be tight and close—not so troubled with business calculations as our English drovers' dogs, who have always got their sheep upon their minds, and think about their work, even resting, as you may see by their faces; but, dashing, showy, rather unreliable dogs: who might worry me instead of their legitimate charges if they saw occasion—and might see it somewhat suddenly.

The market for sheep passes off like the other two; and away they go, by *their* allotted road to Paris. My way being the Railway, I make the best of it at twenty miles an hour; whirling through the now high-lighted landscape; thinking that the inexperienced green buds will be wishing, before long, they had not been tempted to come out so soon; and wondering who lives in this or that château, all window and lattice, and what the family may have for breakfast this sharp morning.

After the Market comes the Abattoir. What abattoir shall I visit first? Montmartre is the largest. So I will go there.

The abattoirs are all within the walls of Paris, with an eye to the receipt of the octroi duty; but they stand in open places in the suburbs, removed from the press and bustle of the city. They are managed by the Syndicat or Guild of Butchers, under the inspection of the Police.

Certain smaller items of the revenue derived from them are in part retained by the Guild for the payment of their expenses, and in part devoted by it to charitable purposes in connection with the trade. They cost six hundred and eighty thousand pounds; and they return to the city of Paris an interest on that outlay, amounting to nearly six and a half per cent.

Here, in a sufficiently dismantled space is the Abattoir of Montmartre, covering nearly nine acres of ground, surrounded by a high wall, and looking from the outside like a cavalry barrack. At the iron gates is a small functionary in a large cocked hat. "Monsieur desires to see the abattoir? Most certainly." State being inconvenient in private transactions, and Monsieur being already aware of the cocked hat, the functionary puts it into a little official bureau which it almost fills, and accompanies me in the modest attire—as to his head—of ordinary life.

Many of the animals from Poissy have come here. On the arrival of each drove, it was turned into yonder ample space, where each butcher who had bought, selected his own purchases. Some, we see now, in these long perspectives of stalls with a high overhanging roof of wood and open tiles rising above the walls. While they rest here, before being slaughtered, they are required to be fed and watered, and the stalls must be kept clean. A stated amount of fodder must always be ready in the loft above; and the supervision is of the strictest kind. The same regulations apply to sheep and calves; for which, portions of these perspectives are strongly railed off. All the buildings are of the strongest and most solid description.

After traversing these lairs, through which, besides the upper provision for ventilation just mentioned, there may be a thorough current of air from opposite windows in the side walls, and from doors at either end, we traverse the broad, paved courtyard until we come to the slaughter-houses. They are all exactly alike, and adjoin each other, to the number of eight or nine together, in blocks of solid building. Let us walk into the first.

It is firmly built and paved with stone. It is well lighted, thoroughly aired, and lavishly provided with fresh water. It has two doors opposite each other; the first, the door by which I entered from the main yard; the second, which is opposite, opening on another smaller yard, where

the sheep and calves are killed on benches. The pavement of that yard, I see, slopes downward to a gutter, for its being more easily cleansed. The slaughter-house is fifteen feet high, sixteen feet and a half wide, and thirty-three feet long. It is fitted with a powerful windlass, by which one man at the handle can bring the head of an ox down to the ground to receive the blow from the pole-axe that is to fell him—with the means of raising the carcass and keeping it suspended during the after-operation of dressing—and with hooks on which carcasses can hang, when completely prepared, without touching the walls. Upon the pavement of this first stone chamber, lies an ox scarcely dead. If I except the blood draining from him into a little stone well in a corner of the pavement, the place is free from offence as the Place de la Concorde. It is infinitely purer and cleaner, I know, my friend the functionary, than the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Ha, ha! Monsieur is pleasant, but, truly, there is reason, too, in what he says.

I look into another of these slaughter-houses. "Pray enter," says a gentleman in bloody boots. "This is a calf I have killed this morning. Having a little time upon my hands, I have cut and punctured this lace pattern in the coats of his stomach. It is pretty enough. I did it to divert myself."—"It is beautiful, Monsieur, the slaughterer!" He tells me I have the gentility to say so.

I look into rows of slaughter-houses. In many, retail dealers, who have come here for the purpose, are making bargains for meat. There is killing enough, certainly, to satiate an unused eye; and there are steaming carcases enough, to suggest the expediency of a fowl and salad for dinner; but, everywhere, there is an orderly, clean, well-systematised routine of work in progress—horrible work at the best, if you please; but, so much the greater reason why it should be made the best of. I don't know (I think I have observed, my name is Bull) that a Parisian of the lowest order is particularly delicate, or that his nature is remarkable for an infinitesimal infusion of ferocity; but, I do know, my potent, grave, and common counselling Signors, that he is forced, when at this work, to submit himself to a thoroughly good system, and to make an Englishman very heartily ashamed of you.

Here, within the walls of the same abattoir, in other roomy and commodious buildings, are a place for convert-

ing the fat into tallow and packing it for market—a place for cleansing and scalding calves' heads and sheeps' feet—a place for preparing tripe—stables and coach-houses for the butchers—innumerable conveniences, aiding in the diminution of offensiveness to its lowest possible point, and the raising of cleanliness and supervision to their highest. Hence, all the meat that goes out of the gate is sent away in clean covered carts. And if every trade connected with the slaughtering of animals were obliged by law to be carried on in the same place, I doubt, my friend, now reinstated in the cocked hat (whose civility these two francs imperfectly acknowledge, but appear munificently to repay), whether there could be better regulations than those which are carried out at the Abattoir of Montmartre. Adieu, my friend, for I am away to the other side of Paris, to the Abattoir of Grenelle! And there I find exactly the same thing on a smaller scale, with the addition of a magnificent Artesian well, and a different sort of conductor, in the person of a neat little woman with neat little eyes, and a neat little voice, who picks her neat little way among the bullocks in a very neat little pair of shoes and stockings.

Such is the Monument of French Folly which a foreigneering people have erected, in a national hatred and antipathy for common counselling wisdom. That wisdom, assembled in the City of London, having distinctly refused, after a debate of three days long, and by a majority of nearly seven to one, to associate itself with any Metropolitan Cattle Market unless it be held in the midst of the City, it follows that we shall lose the inestimable advantages of common counselling protection, and be thrown, for a market, on our own wretched resources. In all human probability we shall thus come, at last, to erect a monument of folly very like this French monument. If that be done, the consequences are obvious. The leather trade will be ruined, by the introduction of American timber, to be manufactured into shoes for the fallen English; the Lord Mayor will be required, by the popular voice, to live entirely on frogs; and both these changes will (how, is not at present quite clear, but certainly somehow or other) fall on that unhappy landed interest which is always being killed, yet is always found to be alive—and kicking.

BILL-STICKING.

If I had an enemy whom I hated—which Heaven forbid!—and if I knew of something which sat heavy on his conscience, I think I would introduce that something into a Posting-Bill, and place a large impression in the hands of an active sticker. I can scarcely imagine a more terrible revenge. I should haunt him, by this means, night and day. I do not mean to say that I would publish his secret, in red letters two feet high, for all the town to read: I would darkly refer to it. It should be between him, and me, and the Posting-Bill. Say, for example, that, at a certain period of his life, my enemy had surreptitiously possessed himself of a key. I would then embark my capital in the look business, and conduct that business on the advertising principle. In all my placards and advertisements, I would throw up the line SECRET KEYS. Thus, if my enemy passed an uninhabited house, he would see his conscience glaring down on him from the parapets, and peeping up at him from the cellars. If he took a dead wall in his walk, it would be alive with reproaches. If he sought refuge in an omnibus, the panels thereof would become Belshazzar's palace to him. If he took boat, in a wild endeavour to escape, he would see the fatal words lurking under the arches of the bridges over the Thames. If he walked the streets with downcast eyes, he would recoil from the very stones of the pavement, made eloquent by lamp-black lithograph. If he drove or rode, his way would be blocked up, by enormous vans, each proclaiming the same words over and over again from its whole extent of surface. Until, having gradually grown thinner and paler, and having at last totally rejected food, he would miserably perish, and I should be revenged. This conclusion I should, no doubt, celebrate by laughing a hoarse laugh in three syllables, and folding my arms tight upon my chest agreeably to most of the examples of glutted animosity that I have had an opportunity of observing in connection with the Drama—which, by the bye, as involving a good deal of noise, appears to me to be occasionally confounded with the Drummer.

The foregoing reflections presented themselves to my

mind, the other day, as I contemplated (being newly come to London from the East Riding of Yorkshire, on a house-hunting expedition for next May), an old warehouse which rotting paste and rotting paper had brought down to the condition of an old cheese. It would have been impossible to say, on the most conscientious survey, how much of its front was brick and mortar, and how much decaying and decayed plaster. It was so thickly encrusted with fragments of bills, that no ship's keel after a long voyage could be half so foul. All traces of the broken windows were billed out, the doors were billed across, the water-spout was billed over. The building was shored up to prevent its tumbling into the street; and the very beams erected against it were less wood than paste and paper, they had been so continually posted and reposted. The forlorn dregs of old posters so encumbered this wreck, that there was no hold for new posters, and the stickers had abandoned the place in despair, except one enterprising man who had hoisted the last masquerade to a clear spot near the level of the stack of chimneys where it waved and drooped like a shattered flag. Below the rusty cellar-grating, crumpled remnants of old bills torn down, rotted away in wasted heaps of fallen leaves. Here and there, some of the thick rind of the house had peeled off in strips, and fluttered heavily down, littering the street; but, still, below these rents and gashes, layers of decomposing posters showed themselves, as if they were interminable. I thought the building could never even be pulled down, but in one adhesive heap of rottenness and poster. As to getting in —I don't believe that if the Sleeping Beauty and her Court had been so billed up, the young Prince could have done it.

Knowing all the posters that were yet legible, intimately, and pondering on their ubiquitous nature, I was led into the reflections with which I began this paper, by considering what an awful thing it would be, ever to have wronged—say M. JULLIEN for example—and to have his avenging name in characters of fire incessantly before my eyes. Or to have injured MADAME TUSSAUD, and undergo a similar retribution. Has any man a self-reproachful thought associated with pills, or ointment? What an avenging spirit to that man is PROFESSOR HOLLOWAY! Have I sinned in oil? CABBURN pursues me. Have I a dark remembrance associated with any gentlemanly garments, bespoke or

ready made? MOSES and SON are on my track. Did I ever aim a blow at a defenceless fellow-creature's head? That head eternally being measured for a wig, or that worse head which was bald before it used the balsam, and hirsute afterwards—enforcing the benevolent moral, "Better to be bald as a Dutch cheese than come to this,"—undoes me. Have I no sore places in my mind which MECHI touches—which NICOLL probes—which no registered article whatever lacerates? Does no discordant note within me thrill responsive to mysterious watchwords, as "Revalenta Arabica," or "Number One St. Paul's Churchyard?" Then may I enjoy life, and be happy.

Lifting up my eyes, as I was musing to this effect, I beheld advancing towards me (I was then on Cornhill, near to the Royal Exchange), a solemn procession of three advertising vans, of first-class dimensions, each drawn by a very little horse. As the cavalcade approached, I was at a loss to reconcile the careless deportment of the drivers of these vehicles, with the terrific announcements they conducted through the city, which being a summary of the contents of a Sunday newspaper, were of the most thrilling kind. Robbery, fire, murder, and the ruin of the United Kingdom—each discharged in a line by itself, like a separate broadside of red-hot shot—were among the least of the warnings addressed to an unthinking people. Yet, the Ministers of Fate who drove the awful cars, leaned forward with their arms upon their knees in a state of extreme lassitude, for want of any subject of interest. The first man, whose hair I might naturally have expected to see standing on end, scratched his head—one of the smoothest I ever beheld—with profound indifference. The second whistled. The third yawned.

Pausing to dwell upon this apathy, it appeared to me, as the fatal cars came by me, that I descried in the second car, through the portal in which the charioteer was seated, a figure stretched upon the floor. At the same time, I thought I smelt tobacco. The latter impression passed quickly from me; the former remained. Curious to know whether this prostrate figure was the one impressible man of the whole capital who had been stricken insensible by the terrors revealed to him, and whose form had been placed in the car by the charioteer, from motives of humanity, I followed the procession. It turned into Leaden-

hall-market, and halted at a public-house. Each driver dismounted. I then distinctly heard, proceeding from the second car, where I had dimly seen the prostrate form, the words:

"And a pipe!"

The driver entering the public-house with his fellows, apparently for purposes of refreshment, I could not refrain from mounting on the shaft of the second vehicle, and looking in at the portal. I then beheld, reclining on his back upon the floor, on a kind of mattress or divan, a little man in a shooting-coat. The exclamation "Dear me" which irresistibly escaped my lips caused him to sit upright, and survey me. I found him to be a good-looking little man of about fifty, with a shining face, a tight head, a bright eye, a moist wink, a quick speech, and a ready air. He had something of a sporting way with him.

He looked at me, and I looked at him, until the driver displaced me by handing in a pint of beer, a pipe, and what I understand is called "a screw" of tobacco—an object which has the appearance of a curl-paper taken off the barmaid's head, with the curl in it.

"I beg your pardon," said I, when the removed person of the driver again admitted of my presenting my face at the portal. "But—excuse my curiosity, which I inherit from my mother—do you live here?"

"That's good, too!" returned the little man, composedly laying aside a pipe he had smoked out, and filling the pipe just brought to him.

"Oh, you *don't* live here then?" said I.

He shook his head, as he calmly lighted his pipe by means of a German tinder-box, and replied, "This is my carriage. When things are flat, I take a ride sometimes, and enjoy myself. I am the inventor of these wans."

His pipe was now alight. He drank his beer all at once, and he smoked and he smiled at me.

"It was a great idea!" said I.

"Not so bad," returned the little man, with the modesty of merit.

"Might I be permitted to inscribe your name upon the tablets of my memory?" I asked.

"There's not much odds in the name," returned the little man, "—no name particular—I am the King of the Bill-Stickers."

"Good gracious!" said I.

The monarch informed me, with a smile, that he had never been crowned or installed with any public ceremonies, but, that he was peaceably acknowledged as King of the Bill-Stickers in right of being the oldest and most respected member of "the old school of bill-sticking." He likewise gave me to understand that there was a Lord Mayor of the Bill-Stickers, whose genius was chiefly exercised within the limits of the city. He made some allusion, also, to an inferior potentate, called "Turkey-legs;" but, I did not understand that this gentleman was invested with much power. I rather inferred that he derived his title from some peculiarity of gait, and that it was of an honorary character.

"My father," pursued the King of the Bill-Stickers, "was Engineer, Beadle, and Bill-Sticker to the Parish of St. Andrew's, Holborn, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty. My father stuck bills at the time of the riots of London."

"You must be acquainted with the whole subject of bill-sticking, from that time to the present!" said I.

"Pretty well so," was the answer.

"Excuse me," said I; "but I am a sort of collector——"

"Not Income-tax?" cried His Majesty, hastily removing his pipe from his lips.

"No, no," said I.

"Water-rate?" said His Majesty.

"No, no," I returned.

"Gas? Assessed? Sewers?" said His Majesty.

"You misunderstand me," I replied, soothingly "Not that sort of collector at all: a collector of facts."

"Oh, if it's only facts," cried the King of the Bill-Stickers, recovering his good-humour, and banishing the great mistrust that had suddenly fallen upon him, "come in and welcome! If it had been income, or winders, I think I should have pitched you out of the wan, upon my soul!"

Readily complying with the invitation, I squeezed myself in at the small aperture. His Majesty, graciously handing me a little three-legged stool on which I took my seat in a corner, inquired if I smoked.

"I do;—that is, I can," I answered

"Pipe and a screw!" said His Majesty to the attendant

charioteer. "Do you prefer a dry smoke, or do you moisten it?"

As unmitigated tobacco produces most disturbing effects upon my system (indeed, if I had perfect moral courage, I doubt if I should smoke at all, under any circumstances), I advocated moisture, and begged the Sovereign of the Bill-Stickers to name his usual liquor, and to concede to me the privilege of paying for it. After some delicate reluctance on his part, we were provided, through the instrumentality of the attendant charioteer, with a can of cold rum-and-water, flavoured with sugar and lemon. We were also furnished with a tumbler, and I was provided with a pipe. His Majesty, then observing that we might combine business with conversation, gave the word for the car to proceed; and, to my great delight, we jogged away at a foot pace.

I say to my great delight, because I am very fond of novelty, and it was a new sensation to be jolting through the tumult of the city in that secluded Temple, partly open to the sky, surrounded by the roar without, and seeing nothing but the clouds. Occasionally, blows from whips fell heavily on the Temple's walls, when by stopping up the road longer than usual, we irritated carters and coachmen to madness; but, they fell harmless upon us within and disturbed not the serenity of our peaceful retreat. As I looked upward, I felt, I should imagine, like the Astronomer Royal. I was enchanted by the contrast between the freezing nature of our external mission on the blood of the populace, and the perfect composure reigning within those sacred precincts: where His Majesty, reclining easily on his left arm, smoked his pipe and drank his rum-and-water from his own side of the tumbler, which stood impartially between us. As I looked down from the clouds and caught his royal eye, he understood my reflections. "I have an idea," he observed, with an upward glance, "of training scarlet runners across in the season,—making a arbor of it, —and sometimes taking tea in the same, according to the song."

I nodded approval.

"And here you repose and think?" said I.

"And think," said he, "of posters—walls—and hoardings."

We were both silent, contemplating the vastness of the

subject. I remembered a surprising fancy of dear THOMAS HOOD'S, and wondered whether this monarch ever sighed to repair to the great wall of China, and stick bills all over it.

"And so," said he, rousing himself, "it's facts as you collect?"

"Facts," said I.

"The facts of bill-sticking," pursued His Majesty, in a benignant manner, "as known to myself, air as following. When my father was Engineer, Beadle, and Bill-Sticker to the parish of St Andrew's, Holborn, he employed women to post bills for him. He employed women to post bills at the time of the riots of London. He died at the age of seventy-five year, and was buried by the murdered Eliza Grimwood, over in the Waterloo-road."

As this was somewhat in the nature of a royal speech, I listened with deference and silently. His Majesty, taking a scroll from his pocket, proceeded, with great distinctness, to pour out the following flood of information:

"'The bills being at that period mostly proclamations and declarations, and which were only a demy size, the matter of posting the bills (as they did not use brushes) was by means of a piece of wood which they called a 'dabber.' Thus things continued till such time as the State Lottery was passed, and then the printers began to print larger bills, and men were employed instead of women, as the State Lottery Commissioners then began to send men all over England to post bills, and would keep them out for six or eight months at a time, and they were called by the London bill-stickers '*trampers*,' their wages at the time being ten shillings per day, besides expenses. They used sometimes to be stationed in large towns for five or six months together, distributing the schemes to all the houses in the town. And then there were more caricature wood-block engravings for posting-bills than there are at the present time, the principal printers, at that time, of posting-bills being Messrs. Evans and Ruffy, of Budge-row; Thoroughgood and Whiting, of the present day; and Messrs. Gye and Balne, Grace-church Street, City. The largest bills printed at that period were a two-sheet double crown: and when they commenced printing four-sheet bills, two bill-stickers would work together. They had no settled wages per week, but had a fixed price for their work, and the London bill-stickers, during a lottery week,

have been known to earn, each, eight or nine pounds per week, till the day of drawing; likewise the men who carried boards in the street used to have one pound per week, and the bill-stickers at that time would not allow any one to wilfully cover or destroy their bills, as they had a society amongst themselves, and very frequently dined together at some public-house where they used to go of an evening to have their work delivered out untoe 'em.' "

All this His Majesty delivered in a gallant manner; posting it, as it were, before me, in a great proclamation. I took advantage of the pause he now made, to inquire what a "two-sheet double crown" might express?

"A two-sheet double crown," replied the King, "is a bill thirty-nine inches wide by thirty inches high."

"Is it possible," said I, my mind reverting to the gigantic admonitions we were then displaying to the multitude—which were as infants to some of the posting-bills on the rotten old warehouse—"that some few years ago the largest bill was no larger than that?"

"The fact," returned the King, "is undoubtedly so." Here he instantly rushed again into the scroll.

"'Since the abolishing of the State Lottery all that good feeling has gone, and nothing but jealousy exists, through the rivalry of each other. Several bill-sticking companies have started, but have failed. The first party that started a company was twelve year ago; but what was left of the old school and their dependants joined together and opposed them. And for some time we were quiet again, till a printer of Hatton Garden formed a company by hiring the sides of houses; but he was not supported by the public, and he left his wooden frames fixed up for rent. The last company that started, took advantage of the New Police Act, and hired of Messrs. Grissell and Peto the hoarding of Trafalgar Square, and established a bill-sticking office in Cursitor-street, Chancery-lane, and engaged some of the new bill-stickers to do their work, and for a time got the half of all our work, and with such spirit did they carry on their opposition towards us, that they used to give us in charge before the magistrate, and get us fined; but they found it so expensive, that they could not keep it up, for they were always employing a lot of ruffians from the Seven Dials to come and fight us; and on one occasion the old bill-stickers went to Trafalgar Square to attempt to

post bills, when they were given in custody by the watchman in their employ, and fined at Queen Square five pounds, as they would not allow any of us to speak in the office; but when they were gone, we had an interview with the magistrate, who mitigated the fine to fifteen shillings. During the time the men were waiting for the fine, this company started off to a public-house that we were in the habit of using, and waited for us coming back, where a fighting scene took place that beggars description. Shortly after this, the principal one day came and shook hands with us, and acknowledged that he had broken up the company, and that he himself had lost five hundred pound in trying to overthrow us. We then took possession of the hoarding in Trafalgar Square; but Messrs. Grissel and Peto would not allow us to post our bills on the said hoarding without paying them—and from first to last we paid upwards of two hundred pounds for that hoarding, and likewise the hoarding of the Reform Club-house, Pall Mall.'"

His Majesty, being now completely out of breath, laid down his scroll (which he appeared to have finished), puffed at his pipe, and took some rum-and-water. I embraced the opportunity of asking how many divisions the art and mystery of bill-sticking comprised? He replied, three—auctioneers' bill-sticking, theatrical bill-sticking, general bill-sticking.

"The auctioneers' porters," said the King, "who do their bill-sticking, are mostly respectable and intelligent, and generally well paid for their work, whether in town or country. The price paid by the principal auctioneers for country work is nine shillings per day; that is, seven shillings for day's work, one shilling for lodging, and one for paste. Town work is five shillings a day, including paste."

"Town work must be rather hot-work," said I, "if there be many of those fighting scenes that beggar description, among the bill-stickers?"

"Well," replied the King, "I an't a stranger, I assure you, to black eyes; a bill-sticker ought to know how to handle his fists a bit. As to that row I have mentioned, that grew out of competition, conducted in an uncompromising spirit. Besides a man in a horse-and-shay continually following us about, the company had a watchman on

duty, night and day, to prevent us sticking bills upon the hoarding in Trafalgar Square. We went there, early one morning, to stick bills and to black-wash their bills if we were interfered with. We *were* interfered with and I gave the word for laying on the wash. It *was* laid on—pretty brisk—and we were all taken to Queen Square: but they couldn't fine *me*. *I* knew that,"—with a bright smile—"I'd only give directions—I was only the General."

Charmed with this monarch's affability, I inquired if he had ever hired a hoarding himself.

"Hired a large one," he replied, "opposite the Lyceum Theatre, when the buildings was there. Paid thirty pound for it; let out places on it, and called it 'The External Paper Hanging Station.' But it didn't answer. Ah!" said His Majesty thoughtfully, as he filled the glass, "Bill-stickers have a deal to contend with. The bill-sticking clause was got into the Police Act by a member of Parliament that employed me at his election. The clause is pretty stiff respecting where bills go; but *he* didn't mind where *his* bills went. It was all right enough, so long as they were *his* bills!"

Fearful that I observed a shadow of misanthropy on the King's cheerful face, I asked whose ingenious invention that was, which I greatly admired, of sticking bills under the arches of the bridges.

"Mine!" said His Majesty. "I was the first that ever stuck a bill under a bridge! Imitators soon rose up, of course.—When don't they? But they stuck 'em at low-water, and the tide came and swept the bills clean away. *I* knew that!" The King laughed.

"What may be the name of that instrument, like an immense fishing-rod," I inquired, "with which bills are posted on high places?"

"The joints," returned His Majesty. "Now, we use the joints where formerly we used ladders—as they do still in country places. Once, when Madame" (Vestris, understood) "was playing in Liverpool, another bill-sticker and me were at it together on the wall outside the Clarence Dock—me with the joints—him on a ladder. Lord! I had my bill up, right over his head, yards above him, ladder and all, while he was crawling to his work. The people going in and out of the docks, stood and laughed!—It's about thirty years since the joints come in."

"Are there any bill-stickers who can't read?" I took the liberty of inquiring

"Some," said the King. "But they know which is the right side up'ards of their work. They keep it as it's given out to 'em. I have seen a bill or so stuck wrong side up'ards. But it's very rare."

Our discourse sustained some interruption at this point, by the procession of cars occasioning a stoppage of about three quarters of a mile in length, as nearly as I could judge. His Majesty, however, entreating me not to be discomposed by the contingent uproar, smoked with great placidity, and surveyed the firmament.

When we were again in motion, I begged to be informed what was the largest poster His Majesty had ever seen. The King replied, "A thirty-six sheet poster." I gathered, also, that there were about a hundred and fifty bill-stickers in London, and that His Majesty considered an average hand equal to the posting of one hundred bills (single sheets) in a day. The King was of opinion, that, although posters had much increased in size, they had not increased in number; as the abolition of the State Lotteries had occasioned a great falling off, especially in the country. Over and above which change, I bethought myself that the custom of advertising in newspapers had greatly increased. The completion of many London improvements, as Trafalgar Square (I particularly observed the singularity of His Majesty's calling *that* an improvement), the Royal Exchange, &c., had of late years reduced the number of advantageous posting-places. Bill-Stickers at present rather confine themselves to districts, than to particular descriptions of work. One man would strike over Whitechapel, another would take round Houndsditch, Shoreditch, and the City Road; one (the King said) would stick to the Surrey side; another would make a beat of the West-end.

His Majesty remarked, with some approach to severity, on the neglect of delicacy and taste, gradually introduced into the trade by the new school: a profligate and inferior race of imposters who took jobs at almost any price, to the detriment of the old school, and the confusion of their own misguided employers. He considered that the trade was overdone with competition, and observed speaking of his subjects, "There are too many of 'em." He believed, still,

that things were a little better than they had been; adducing, as a proof, the fact that particular posting places were now reserved, by common consent, for particular posters; those places, however, must be regularly occupied by those posters, or they lapsed and fell into other hands. It was of no use giving a man a Drury Lane bill this week and not next. Where was it to go? He was of opinion that going to the expense of putting up your own board on which your sticker could display your own bills, was the only complete way of posting yourself at the present time; but, even to effect this, on payment of a shilling a week to the keepers of steam-boat piers and other such places, you must be able, besides, to give orders for theatres and public exhibitions, or you would be sure to be cut out by somebody. His Majesty regarded the passion for orders, as one of the most unappeasable appetites of human nature. If there were a building, or if there were repairs, going on, anywhere, you could generally stand something and make it right with the foreman of the works; but, orders would be expected from you, and the man who could give the most orders was the man who would come off best. There was this other objectionable point, in orders, that workmen sold them for drink, and often sold them to persons who were likewise troubled with the weakness of thirst: which led (His Majesty said) to the presentation of your orders at Theatre doors, by individuals who were "too shakery" to derive intellectual profit from the entertainments, and who brought a scandal on you. Finally, His Majesty said that you could hardly put too little in a poster; what you wanted, was, two or three good catch-lines for the eye to rest on—then, leave it alone—and there you were!

These are the minutes of my conversation with His Majesty, as I noted them down shortly afterwards. I am not aware that I have been betrayed into any alteration or suppression. The manner of the King was frank in the extreme; and he seemed to me to avoid, at once that slight tendency to repetition which may have been observed in the conversation of His Majesty King George the Third, and that slight under-current of egotism which the curious observer may perhaps detect in the conversation of Napoleon Bonaparte.

I must do the King the justice to say that it was I, and not he, who closed the dialogue. At this juncture, I be-

came the subject of a remarkable optical delusion; the legs of my stool appeared to me to double up; the ear to spin round and round with great violence; and a mist to arise between myself and His Majesty. In addition to these sensations, I felt extremely unwell. I refer these unpleasant effects, either to the paste with which the posters were affixed to the van: which may have contained some small portion of arsenic; or, to the printer's ink, which may have contained some equally deleterious ingredient. Of this, I cannot be sure. I am only sure that I was not affected, either by the smoke, or the rum-and-water. I was assisted out of the vehicle, in a state of mind which I have only experienced in two other places—I allude to the Pier at Dover, and to the corresponding portion of the town of Calais—and sat upon a door-step until I recovered. The procession had then disappeared. I have since looked anxiously for the King in several other cars, but I have not yet had the happiness of seeing His Majesty.

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* EPSOM.

On that great occasion, an unused spectator might imagine that all London turned out. There is little perceptible difference in the bustle of its crowded streets, but all the roads leading to Epsom Downs are so thronged and blocked by every description of carriage that it is marvellous to consider how, when, and where, they were all made —out of what possible wealth they are all maintained—and by what laws the supply of horses is kept equal to the demand. Near the favourite bridges, and at various leading points of the leading roads, clusters of people post themselves by nine o'clock, to see the Derby people pass. Then come flitting by, barouches, phaetons, broughams, gigs, four-wheeled chaises, four-in-hands, Hansom cabs, cabs of lesser note, chaise-carts, donkey-carts, tilted vans made aborescent with green boughs and carrying no end of people, and a cask of beer—equestrians, pedestrians, horse-dealers, gentlemen, notabilities and swindlers by tens of thousands—gradually thickening and accumulating, until at last, a mile short of the turnpike, they become wedged

together, and are very slowly filtered through layers of policemen, mounted and afoot, until, one by one, they pass the gate and skurry down the hill beyond. The most singular combinations occur in these turnpike stoppages and presses. Four-in-hand leaders look affectionately over the shoulders of ladies in bright shawls, perched in gigs; poles of carriages appear uninvited, in the midst of social parties in phaetons; little, fast, short-stepping ponies run up carriage wheels before they can be stopped, and hold on behind like footmen. Now, the gentleman who is unaccustomed to public driving, gets into astonishing perplexities. Now, the Hansom cab whisks craftily in and out, and seems occasionally to fly over a waggon or so. Now, the post-boy on a jibbing or shying horse, curses the evil hour of his birth, and is ingloriously assisted by the shabby hostler out of place, who is walking down with seven shabby companions more or less equine, open to the various chances of the road. Now, the air is fresh, and the dust flies thick and fast. Now, the canvas-booths upon the course are seen to glisten and flutter in the distance. Now, the adventurous vehicles make cut across, and get into ruts and gravel-pits. Now, the heather in bloom is like a field of gold, and the roar of voices is like a wind. Now, we leave the hard road and go smoothly rolling over the soft green turf attended by an army of importunate worshippers in red jackets and stable jackets, who make a very Juggernaut car of our equipage and now breathlessly call us My Lord, and now Your Honour. Now, we pass the outer settlements of tents where pots and kettles are—where gipsy children are—where airy stabling is—where tares for horses may be bought—where water, water, water is proclaimed—where the Tumbler in an old pea-coat, with a spangled fillet round his head, eats oysters, while his wife takes care of the golden globes, and the knives, and also of the starry little boy, their son, who lives principally upside down. Now we pay our one pound at the barrier, and go faster on still Juggernautwise, attended by our devotees, until at last we are drawn, and rounded, and backed, and sidled, and cursed and complimented, and vociferated, into a station on the hill opposite the Grand Stand, where we presently find ourselves on foot, much bewildered, waited on by five respectful persons, who *will* brush us all at once.

Well, to be sure, there never was such a Derby Day, as

this present Derby Day! Never, to be sure, were there so many carriages, so many fours, so many twos, so many ones, so many horsemen, so many people who have come down by "rail," so many fine ladies in so many broughams, so many of Fortnum and Mason's hampers, so much ice and champagne! If I were on the turf, and had a horse to enter for the Derby, I would call that horse Fortnum and Mason, convinced that with that name he would beat the field. Public opinion would bring him in somehow. Look where I will—in some connection with the carriages—made fast upon the top, or occupying the box, or tied up behind, or dangling below, or peeping out of window—I see Fortnum and Mason. And now, Heavens! all the hampers fly wide open, and the green Downs burst into a blossom of lobster-salad!

As if the great Trafalgar signal had been suddenly displayed from the top of the Grand Stand, every man proceeds to do his duty. The weaker spirits, who were ashamed to set the great example, follow it instantly, and all around me there are table-cloths, pies, chickens, hams, tongues, rolls, lettuces, radishes, shell-fish, broad-bottomed bottles, clinking glasses, and carriages turned inside out. Amidst the hum of voices a bell rings. What's that? What's the matter? They are clearing the course. Never mind. Try the pigeon-pie. A roar. What's the matter? It's only the dog upon the course. Is that all? Glass of wine. Another roar. What's that? It's only the man who wants to cross the course, and is intercepted, and brought back. Is that all? I wonder whether it is always the same dog and the same man, year after year! A great roar. What's the matter? By Jupiter, they are going to start!

A deeper hum and a louder roar. Everybody standing on Fortnum and Mason. Now they're off! No. *Now* they're off! No. *Now* they're off! No. *Now* they are! Yes!

There they go! Here they come! Where? Keep your eye on Tattenham Corner, and you'll see 'em, coming round in half a minute. Good gracious, look at the Grand Stand, piled up with human beings to the top, and at the wonderful effect of changing light as all their faces and uncovered heads turn suddenly this way! Here they are! Who is? The horses! Where? Here they come! Green first. No;

Red first. No; Blue first. No; the Favourite first! Who says so? Look! Hurrah! Hurrah! All over. Glorious race. Favourite wins! Two hundred thousand pounds lost and won. You don't say so! Pass the pie!

Now, the pigeons fly away with the news. Now, every one dismounts from the top of Fortnum and Mason, and falls to work with greater earnestness than before, on carriage boxes, sides, tops, wheels, steps, roofs, and rumbles. Now, the living stream upon the course, dammed for a little while at one point, is released, and spreads like particoloured grain. Now, the roof of the Grand Stand is deserted. Now, rings are formed upon the course, where strong men stand in pyramids on one another's heads; where the Highland lady dances; where the Devonshire Lad sets-to with the Bantam; where the Tumbler throws the golden globes about, with the starry little boy tied round him in a knot.

Now, all the variety of human riddles who propound themselves on race-courses, come about the carriages, to be guessed. Now, the gipsy woman, with the flashing red or yellow handkerchief about her head, and the strange silvery-hoarse voice, appears, My pretty gentleman, to tell your fortin, Sir; for you have a merry eye, my gentleman, and surprises is in store for you, connected with a dark lady as loves you better than you love a kiss in a dark corner when the moon's a shining; for you have a lively 'art, my gentleman, and you shall know her secret thoughts, and the first and last letters of her name, my pretty gentleman, if you will cross your poor gipsy's hand with a little bit of silver, for the luck of the fortin as the gipsy will read true, from the lines of your hand, my gentleman, both as to what is past, and present, and to come. Now, the Ethiopians, looking unutterably hideous in the sunlight, play old banjoes and bones, on which no man could perform ten years ago, but which, it seems, any man may play now, if he will only blacken his face, put on a crisp wig, a white waistcoat and wristbands, a large white tie, and give his mind to it. Now, the sickly-looking ventriloquist, with an anxious face (and always with a wife in a shawl) teaches the alphabet to the puppet pupil, whom he takes out of his pocket. Now, my sporting gentlemen, you may ring the Bull, the Bull, the Bull; you may ring the Bull! Now, try your luck at the knock-em-downs, my Noble Swells—

twelve heaves for sixpence, and a pincushion in the centre, worth ten times the money! Now, the Noble Swells take five shillings' worth of "heaves," and carry off a half-penny wooden pear in triumph. Now, it hails, as it always does hail, formidable wooden truncheons round the heads, bodies, and shins of the proprietors of the said knock-em-downs, whom nothing hurts. Now, inscrutable creatures in smock frocks beg for bottles. Now, a coarse vagabond, or idiot, or a compound of the two, never beheld by mortal off a race-course, minces about, with ample skirts and a tattered parasol, counterfeiting a woman. Now, a shabby man, with an overhanging forehead, and a slinking eye, produces a small board, and invites your attention to something novel and curious—three thimbles and one little pea—with a one, two, three—and a two, three, one—and a one—and a two—in the middle—right hand, left hand—go you any bet from a crown to five sovereigns you don't lift the thimble the pea's under! Now, another gentleman (with a stick) much interested in the experiment, will "go" two sovereigns that he does lift the thimble provided strictly that the shabby man holds his hand still, and don't touch 'em again. Now, the bet's made, and the gentleman with the stick lifts obviously the wrong thimble and loses. Now, it is as clear as day to an innocent bystander, that the loser must have won if he had not blindly lifted the wrong thimble—in which he is strongly confirmed by another gentleman with a stick, also much interested, who proposes to "go him" halves—a friendly sovereign to *his* sovereign—against the bank. Now, the innocent agrees, and loses—and so the world turns round bringing innocents with it in abundance, though the three confederates are wretched actors and could live by no other trade if they couldn't do it better.

Now, there is another bell, and another clearing of the course, and another dog, and another man, and another race. Now, there are all these things all over again. Now, down among the carriage-wheels and poles, a scrubby growth of drunken post-boys and the like has sprung into existence, like weeds among the many-coloured flowers of fine ladies in broughams, and so forth. Now, the drinking-booths are all full, and tobacco-smoke is abroad, and an extremely civil gentleman confidentially proposes roulette. And now, faces begin to be jaded, and horses are harnessed,

and wherever the old grey-headed beggar-man goes, he gets among traces and splinter-bars, and is roared at.

So, now, we are on the road again, going home. Now, there are longer stoppages than in the morning; for we are a dense mass of men and women, wheels, horses, and dust. Now, all the houses on the road seem to be turned inside out, like the carriages on the course, and the people belonging to the houses, like the people belonging to the carriages, occupy stations which they never occupy at another time—on leads, on housetops, on out-buildings, at windows, in balconies, in door-ways, in gardens. Schools are drawn out to see the company go by. The academies for young gentlemen favour us with dried peas; the Establishments for Young Ladies (into which sanctuaries many wooden pears are pitched), with bright eyes. We become sentimental, and wish we could marry Clapham. The crowd thickens on both sides of the road. All London appears to have come out to see us. It is like a triumphant entry—except that, on the whole, we rather amuse than impress the populace. There are little love-scenes among the chestnut trees by the roadside—young gentlemen in gardens resentful of glances at young ladies from coach-tops—other young gentlemen in other gardens, whose arms, encircling young ladies, seem to be trained like the vines. There are good family pictures—stout fathers and jolly mothers—rosy cheeks squeezed in between the rails—and infinitesimal jockeys winning in canters on walking-sticks. There are smart maid-servants among the grooms at stable-doors, where Cook looms large and glowing. There is plenty of smoking and drinking among the titled vans and at the public-houses, and some singing, but general order and good-humour. So, we leave the gardens and come into the streets, and if we there encounter a few ruffians throwing flour and chalk about, we know them for the dregs and refuse of a fine, trustworthy people, deserving of all confidence and honour.

And now we are at home again—far from absolutely certain of the name of the winner of the Derby—knowing nothing whatever about any other race of the day—still tenderly affected by the beauty of Clapham—and thoughtful over the ashes of Fortnum and Mason.

ON DUTY WITH INSPECTOR FIELD.

How goes the night? Saint Giles's clock is striking nine. The weather is dull and wet, and the long lines of street lamps are blurred, as if we saw them through tears. A damp wind blows and rakes the pieman's fire out, when he opens the door of his little furnace, carrying away an eddy of sparks

Saint Giles's clock strikes nine. We are punctual. Where is Inspector Field? Assistant Commissioner of Police is already here, enwrapped in oil-skin cloak, and standing in the shadow of Saint Giles's steeple. Detective Sergeant, weary of speaking French all day to foreigners unpacking at the Great Exhibition, is already here. Where is Inspector Field?

Inspector Field is, to-night, the guardian genius of the British Museum. He is bringing his shrewd eye to bear on every corner of its solitary galleries, before he reports "all right." Suspicious of the Elgin marbles, and not to be done by cat-faced Egyptian giants with their hands upon their knees, Inspector Field, sagacious, vigilant, lamp in hand, throwing monstrous shadows on the walls and ceilings, passes through the spacious rooms. If a mummy trembled in an atom of its dusty covering, Inspector Field would say, "Come out of that, Tom Green. I know you!" If the smallest "Gonoph" about town were crouching at the bottom of a classic bath, Inspector Field would nose him with a finer scent than the ogre's, when adventurous Jack lay trembling in his kitchen copper. But all is quiet, and Inspector Field goes warily on, making little outward show of attending to anything in particular, just recognising the Ichthyosaurus as a familiar acquaintance, and wondering, perhaps, how the detectives did it in the days before the Flood.

Will Inspector Field be long about this work? He may be half-an-hour longer. He sends his compliments by Police Constable, and proposes that we meet at Saint Giles's Station House, across the road. Good. It were as well to stand by the fire, there, as in the shadow of Saint Giles's steeple.

Anything doing here to-night? Not much. We are very quiet. A lost boy, extremely calm and small, sitting by the fire, whom we now confide to a constable to take home, for the child says that if you show him Newgate Street, he can show you where he lives—a raving drunken woman in the cells, who has screeched her voice away, and has hardly power enough left to declare, even with the passionate help of her feet and arms, that she is the daughter of a British officer, and, strike her blind and dead, but she'll write a letter to the Queen! but who is soothed with a drink of water—in another cell, a quiet woman with a child at her breast, for begging—in another, her husband in a smock-frock, with a basket of watercresses—in another, a pickpocket—in another, a meek tremulous old pauper man who has been out for a holiday "and has took but a little drop, but it has overcome him after so many months in the house"—and that's all as yet. Presently, a sensation at the Station House door. Mr. Field, gentlemen!

Inspector Field comes in, wiping his forehead, for he is of a burly figure, and has come fast from the ores and metals of the deep mines of the earth, and from the Parrot Gods of the South Sea Islands, and from the birds and beetles of the tropics, and from the Arts of Greece and Rome, and from the Sculptures of Nineveh, and from the traces of an elder world, when these were not. Is Rogers ready? Rogers is ready, strapped and great-coated, with a flaming eye in the middle of his waist, like a deformed Cyclops. Lead on, Rogers, to Rats' Castle!

How many people may there be in London, who, if we had brought them deviously and blindfold, to this street, fifty paces from the Station House, and within call of Saint Giles's church, would know it for a not remote part of the city in which their lives are passed? How many, who, amidst this compound of sickening smells, these heaps of filth, these tumbling houses, with all their vile contents, animate and inanimate, slimily overflowing into the black road, would believe that they breathe *this* air? How much Red Tape may there be, that could look round on the faces which now hem us in—for our appearance here has caused a rush from all points to a common centre—the lowering foreheads, the sallow cheeks, the brutal eyes, the matted hair, the infected, vermin-haunted heaps of rags—and say

"I have thought of this. I have not dismissed the thing. I have neither blustered it away, nor frozen it away, nor tied it up and put it away, nor smoothly said pooh, pooh! to it when it has been shown to me"?

This is not what Rogers wants to know, however. What Rogers wants to know, is, whether you *will* clear the way here, some of you, or whether you won't; because if you don't do it right on end, he'll lock you up! What! *You* are there, are you, Bob Miles? You haven't had enough of it yet, haven't you? You want three months more, do you? Come away from that gentleman! What are you creeping round there for?

"What am I a doing, thinn, Mr. Rogers?" says Bob Miles, appearing, villanous, at the end of a lane of light, made by the lantern.

"I'll let you know pretty quick, if you don't hook it. WILL you hook it?"

A sycophantic murmur rises from the crowd. "Hook it, Bob, when Mr. Rogers and Mr. Field tells you! Why don't you hook it, when you are told to?"

The most importunate of the voices strikes familiarly on Mr. Rogers's ear. He suddenly turns his lantern on the owner.

"What! *You* are there, are you, Mister Click? You hook it too—come!"

"What for?" says Mr. Click, discomfited.

"You hook it, will you!" says Mr. Rogers with stern emphasis.

Both Click and Miles *do* "hook it," without another word, or, in plainer English, sneak away.

"Close up there, my men!" says Inspector Field to two constables on duty who have followed. "Keep together, gentlemen; we are going down here. Heads!"

Saint Giles's church strikes half-past ten. We stoop low, and creep down a precipitous flight of steps into a dark close cellar. There is a fire. There is a long deal table. There are benches. The cellar is full of company, chiefly very young men in various conditions of dirt and raggedness. Some are eating supper. There are no girls or women present. Welcome to Rats' Castle, gentlemen, and to this company of noted thieves!

"Well my lads! How are you, my lads? What have you been doing to-day? Here's some company come to see

you, my lads! *There's* a plate of beefsteak, sir, for the supper of a fine young man! And there's a mouth for a steak, sir! Why, I should be too proud of such a mouth as that, if I had it myself! Stand up and show it, sir! Take off your cap. There's a fine young man for a nice little party, sir! An't he?"

Inspector Field is the bustling speaker. Inspector Field's eye is the roving eye that searches every corner of the cellar as he talks. Inspector Field's hand is the well-known hand that has collared half the people here, and motioned their brothers, sisters, fathers, mothers, male and female friends, inexorably to New South Wales. Yet Inspector Field stands in this den, the Sultan of the place. Every thief here cowers before him, like a schoolboy before his schoolmaster. All watch him, all answer when addressed, all laugh at his jokes, all seek to propitiate him. This cellar company alone—to say nothing of the crowd surrounding the entrance from the street above, and making the steps shine with eyes—is strong enough to murder us all, and willing enough to do it; but, let Inspector Field have a mind to pick out one thief here, and take him; let him produce that ghostly truncheon from his pocket, and say, with his business-air, "My lad, I want you!" and all Rats' Castle shall be stricken with paralysis, and not a finger move against him, as he fits the handcuffs on!

Where's the Earl of Warwick?—Here he is, Mr. Field! Here's the Earl of Warwick, Mr. Field!—O there you are, my Lord. Come for'ard. There's a chest, sir, not to have a clean shirt on. An't it? Take your hat off, my Lord. Why, I should be ashamed if I was you—and an Earl, too—to show myself to a gentleman with my hat on!—The Earl of Warwick laughs and uncovers. All the company laugh. One pickpocket, especially, laughs with great enthusiasm. O what a jolly game it is, when Mr. Field comes down—and don't want nobody!

So, *you* are here, too, are you, you tall, grey, soldierly-looking, grave man, standing by the fire?—Yes, sir. Good evening, Mr. Field!—Let us see. You lived servant to a nobleman once?—Yes, Mr. Field.—And what is it you do now; I forget?—Well, Mr. Field, I job about as well as I can. I left my employment on account of delicate health. The family is still kind to me. Mr. Wix of Piccadilly is also very kind to me when I am hard up. Likewise Mr.

Nix of Oxford Street. I get a trifle from them occasionally, and rub on as well as I can, Mr. Field. Mr. Field's eye rolls enjoyingly, for this man is a notorious begging-letter writer.—Good night, my lads!—Good night, Mr. Field, and thank'ee, sir!

Clear the street here, half a thousand of you! Cut it, Mrs. Stalker—none of that—we don't want you! Rogers of the flaming eye, lead on to the tramps' lodging-house!

A dream of baleful faces attends to the door. Now, stand back all of you! In the rear Detective Sergeant plants himself, composedly whistling, with his strong right arm across the narrow passage. Mrs. Stalker, I am something'd that need not be written here, if you won't get yourself into trouble, in about half a minute, if I see that face of yours again!

Saint Giles's church clock, striking eleven, hums through our hand from the dilapidated door of a dark outhouse as we open it, and are stricken back by the pestilent breath that issues from within. Rogers to the front with the light, and let us look!

Ten, twenty, thirty—who can count them! Men, women, children, for the most part naked, heaped upon the floor like maggots in a cheese! Ho! In that dark corner yonder! Does anybody lie there? Me sir, Irish me, a widder, with six children. And yonder? Me sir, Irish me, with me wife and eight poor babes. And to the left there? Me sir, Irish me, along with two more Irish boys as is me friends. And to the right there? Me sir and the Murphy fam'ly, numbering five blessed souls. And what's this, coiling, now, about my foot? Another Irish me, pitifully in want of shaving, whom I have awakened from sleep—and across my other foot lies his wife—and by the shoes of Inspector Field lie their three eldest—and their three youngest are at present squeezed between the open door and the wall. And why is there no one on that little mat before the sullen fire? Because O'Donovan, with his wife and daughter, is not come in from selling Lucifers! Nor on the bit of sacking in the nearest corner? Bad luck! Because that Irish family is late to night, a cadging in the streets!

They are all awake now, the children excepted, and most of them sit up, to stare. Wheresoever Mr. Rogers turns the flaming eye, there is a spectral figure rising, un-

shrouded, from a grave of rags. Who is the landlord here?—I am, Mr. Field! says a bundle of ribs and parchment against the wall, scratching itself.—Will you spend this money fairly, in the morning, to buy coffee for 'em all?—Yes, sir, I will!—O he'll do it, sir, he'll do it fair. He's honest! cry the spectres. And with thanks and Good Night sink into their graves again.

Thus, we make our New Oxford Streets, and our other new streets, never heeding, never asking, where the wretches whom we clear out, crowd. With such scenes at our doors, with all the plagues of Egypt tied up with bits of cobweb in kennels so near our homes, we timorously make our Nuisance Bills and Boards of Health, nonentities, and think to keep away the Wolves of Crime and Filth, by our electioneering ducking to little vestrymen and our gentlemanly handling of Red Tape!

Intelligence of the coffee money has got abroad. The yard is full, and Rogers of the flaming eye is beleaguered with entreaties to show other Lodging Houses. Mine next! Mine! Mine! Rogers, military, obdurate, stiff-necked, immovable, replies not, but leads away; all falling back before him. Inspector Field follows. Detective Sergeant, with his barrier of arm across the little passage, deliberately waits to close the procession. He sees behind him, without any effort, and exceedingly disturbs one individual far in the rear by coolly calling out, "It won't do, Mr. Michael! Don't try it!"

After council holden in the street, we enter other lodging-houses, public-houses, many lairs and holes; all noisome and offensive; none so filthy and so crowded as where Irish are. In one, The Ethiopian party are expected home presently—were in Oxford Street when last heard of—shall be fetched, for our delight, within ten minutes. In another, one of the two or three Professors who draw Napoleon Bounaparte and a couple of mackerel, on the pavement, and then let the work of art out to a speculator, is refreshing after his labours. In another, the vested interest of the profitable nuisance has been in one family for a hundred years, and the landlord drives in comfortably from the country to his snug little stew in town. In all, Inspector Field is received with warmth. Coiners and smashers droop before him; pickpockets defer to him; the gentle sex (not very gentle here) smile upon him. Half-

drunken hags check themselves in the midst of pots of beer, or pints of gin, to drink to Mr. Field, and pressingly to ask the honour of his finishing the draught. One beldame in rusty black has such admiration for him, that she runs a whole street's length to shake him by the hand; tumbling into a heap of mud by the way, and still pressing her attentions when her very form has ceased to be distinguishable through it. Before the power of the law, the power of superior sense—for common thieves are fools beside these men—and the power of a perfect mastery of their character, the garrison of Rats' Castle and the adjacent Fortresses make but a skulking show indeed when reviewed by Inspector Field.

Saint Giles's clock says it will be midnight in half-an-hour, and Inspector Field says we must hurry to the Old Mint in the Borough. The cab-driver is low-spirited, and has a solemn sense of his responsibility. Now, what's your fare, my lad?—O *you* know, Inspector Field, what's the good of asking *me!*

Say, Parker, strapped and great-coated, and waiting in dim Borough doorway by appointment, to replace the trusty Rogers whom we left deep in Saint Giles's, are you ready? Ready, Inspector Field, and at a motion of my wrist behold my flaming eye.

This narrow street, sir, is the chief part of the Old Mint, full of low lodging-houses, as you see by the transparent canvas-lamps and blinds, announcing beds for travellers! But it is greatly changed, friend Field, from my former knowledge of it; it is infinitely quieter and more subdued than when I was here last, some seven years ago? O yes! Inspector Haynes, a first-rate man, is on this station now and plays the Devil with them!

Well, my lads! How are you to-night, my lads? Playing cards here, eh? Who wins?—Why, Mr. Field, I, the sulky gentleman with the damp flat side-curls, rubbing my bleared eye with the end of my neckerchief which is like a dirty eel-skin, am losing just at present, but I suppose I must take my pipe out of my mouth, and be submissive to *you*—I hope I see you well, Mr. Field?—Aye, all right, my lad. Deputy, who have you got upstairs? Be pleased to show the rooms!

Why Deputy, Inspector Field can't say. He only knows that the man who takes care of the beds and lodgers is al-

ways called so. Steady, O Deputy, with the flaring candle in the blacking-bottle, for this is a slushy back-yard, and the wooden staircase outside the house creaks and has holes in it.

Again, in these confined intolerable rooms, burrowed out like the holes of rats or the nests of insect-vermin, but fuller of intolerable smells, are crowds of sleepers, each on his foul truckle-bed coiled up beneath a rug. Halloa here! Come! Let us see you! Show your face! Pilot Parker goes from bed to bed and turns their slumbering heads towards us, as a salesman might turn sheep. Some wake up with an execration and a threat.—What! who spoke? O! If it's the accursed glaring eye that fixes me, go where I will, I am helpless. Here! I sit up to be looked at. Is it me you want? Not you, lie down again! and I lie down, with a woful growl.

Wherever the turning lane of light becomes stationary for a moment, some sleeper appears at the end of it, submits himself to be scrutinised, and fades away into the darkness.

There should be strange dreams here, Deputy. They sleep sound enough, says Deputy, taking the candle out of the blacking-bottle, snuffing it with his fingers, throwing the snuff into the bottle, and corking it up with the candle; that's all *I* know. What is the inscription, Deputy, on all the discolored sheets? A precaution against loss of linen. Deputy turns down the rug of an unoccupied bed and discloses it. STOP THIEF!

To lie at night, wrapped in the legend of my slinking life; to take the cry that pursues me, waking, to my breast in sleep; to have it staring at me, and clamouring for me, as soon as consciousness returns; to have it for my first-foot on New-Year's day, my Valentine, my Birthday salute, my Christmas greeting, my parting with the old year. STOP THIEF!

And to know that I *must* be stopped, come what will. To know that I am no match for this individual energy and keenness, or this organised and steady system! Come across the street, here, and, entering by a little shop, and yard, examine these intricate passages and doors, contrived for escape, flapping and counter-flapping, like the lids of the conjuror's boxes. But what avail they? Who gets in by a nod, and shows their secret working to us? Inspector Field.

Don't forget the old Farm House, Parker! Parker is not the man to forget it. We are going there, now. It is the old Manor-House of these parts, and stood in the country once. Then, perhaps, there was something, which was not the beastly street, to see from the shattered low fronts of the overhanging wooden houses we are passing under—shut up now, pasted over with bills about the literature and drama of the Mint, and mouldering away. This long paved yard was a paddock or a garden once, or a court in front of the Farm House. Perchance, with a dovecot in the centre, and fowls pecking about—with fair elm trees, then, where discoloured chimney-stacks and gables are now—noisy, then, with rooks which have yielded to a different sort of rookery. It's likelier than not, Inspector Field thinks, as we turn into the common kitchen, which is in the yard, and many paces from the house.

Well my lads and lasses, how are you all? Where's Blackey, who has stood near London Bridge these five-and-twenty years, with a painted skin to represent disease?—Here he is, Mr. Field!—How are you, Blackey?—Jolly, sa! Not playing the fiddle to-night, Blackey?—Not a night, sa! A sharp, smiling youth, the wit of the kitchen, interposes. He an't musical to-night, sir. I've been giving him a moral lecture; I've been a talking to him about his latter end, you see. A good many of these are my pupils, sir. This here young man (smoothing down the hair of one near him, reading a Sunday paper) is a pupil of mine. I'm a teaching of him to read, sir. He's a promising cove, sir. He's a smith, he is, and gets his living by the sweat of the brow, sir. So do I, myself, sir. This young woman is my sister, Mr. Field. *She's* getting on very well too. I've a deal of trouble with 'em, sir, but I'm richly rewarded, now I see 'em all a doing so well, and growing up so creditable. That's a great comfort, that is, an't it, sir?—In the midst of the kitchen (the whole kitchen is in ecstasies with this impromptu "chaff") sits a young, modest, gentle-looking creature, with a beautiful child in her lap. She seems to belong to the company, but is so strangely unlike it. She has such a pretty, quiet face and voice, and is so proud to hear the child admired—thinks you would hardly believe that he is only nine months old! Is she as bad as the rest, I wonder? Inspectorial experience does not engender a belief contrari-

wise, but prompts the answer, Not a ha'porth of difference!

There is a piano going in the old Farm House as we approach. It stops. Landlady appears. Has no objections, Mr. Field, to gentlemen being brought, but wishes it were at earlier hours, the lodgers complaining of inconvenience. Inspector Field is polite and soothing—knows his woman and the sex. Deputy (a girl in this case) shows the way up a heavy broad old staircase, kept very clean, into clean rooms where many sleepers are, and where painted panels of an older time look strangely on the truckle-beds. The sight of whitewash and the smell of soap—two things we seem by this time to have parted from in infancy—make the old Farm House a phenomenon, and connect themselves with the so curiously misplaced picture of the pretty mother and child long after we have left it,—long after we have left, besides, the neighbouring nook with something of a rustic flavour in it yet, where once, beneath a low wooden colonnade still standing as of yore, the eminent Jack Sheppard condescended to regale himself, and where, now, two old bachelor brothers in broad hats (who are whispered in the Mint to have made a compact long ago that if either should ever marry, he must forfeit his share of the joint property) still keep a sequestered tavern, and sit o' nights smoking pipes in the bar, among ancient bottles and glasses, as our eyes behold them.

How goes the night now? Saint George of Southwark answers with twelve blows upon his bell. Parker, good night, for Williams is already waiting over in the region of Ratcliffe Highway, to show the houses where the sailors dance.

I should like to know where Inspector Field was born. In Ratcliffe Highway, I would have answered with confidence, but for his being equally at home wherever we go. *He* does not trouble his head as I do, about the river at night. *He* does not care for its creeping, black and silent, on our right there, rushing through sluice gates, lapping at piles and posts and iron rings, hiding strange things in its mud, running away with suicides and accidentally drowned bodies faster than midnight funeral should, and acquiring such various experience between its cradle and its grave. It has no mystery for *him*. Is there not the Thames Police!

Accordingly, Williams leads the way. We are a little late, for some of the houses are already closing. No matter. You show us plenty. All the Landlords know Inspector Field. All pass him, freely and good-humouredly, wheresoever he wants to go. So thoroughly are all these houses open to him and our local guide, that, granting that sailors must be entertained in their own way—as I suppose they must, and have a right to be—I hardly know how such places could be better regulated. Not that I call the company very select, or the dancing very graceful—even so graceful as that of the German Sugar Bakers, whose assembly, by the Minories, we stopped to visit—but there is watchful maintenance of order in every house, and swift expulsion where need is. Even in the midst of drunkenness, both of the lethargic kind and the lively, there is sharp landlord supervision, and pockets are in less peril than out of doors. These houses show, singularly, how much of the picturesque and romantic there truly is in the sailor, requiring to be especially addressed. All the songs (sung in a hailstorm of halfpence, which are pitched at the singer without the least tenderness for the time or tune—mostly from great rolls of copper carried for the purpose—and which he occasionally dodges like shot as they fly near his head) are of the sentimental sea sort. All the rooms are decorated with nautical subjects. Wrecks, engagements, ships on fire, ships passing lighthouses on iron-bound coasts, ships blowing up, ships going down, ships running ashore, men lying out upon the main yard in a gale of wind, sailors and ships in every variety of peril, constitute the illustrations of fact. Nothing can be done in the fanciful way, without a thumping boy upon a scaly dolphin.

How goes the night now? Past one. Black and Green are waiting in Whitechapel to unveil the mysteries of Wentworth Street. Williams, the best of friends must part. Adieu!

Are not Black and Green ready at the appointed place? O yes! They glide out of shadow as we stop. Imperturbable Black opens the cab-door; Imperturbable Green takes a mental note of the driver. Both Green and Black then open, each his flaming eye, and marshal us the way that we are going.

The lodging-house we want, is hidden in a maze of

streets and courts. It is fast shut. We knock at the door, and stand hushed looking up for a light at one or other of the begrimed old lattice windows in its ugly front, when another constable comes up—supposes that we want "to see the school." Detective Sergeant meanwhile has got over a rail, opened a gate, dropped down an area, overcome some other little obstacles, and tapped at a window. Now returns. The landlord will send a deputy immediately.

Deputy is heard to stumble out of bed. Deputy lights a candle, draws back a bolt or two, and appears at the door. Deputy is a shivering shirt and trousers by no means clean, a yawning face, a shock head much confused externally and internally. We want to look for some one. You may go up with the light, and take 'em all, if you like, says Deputy, resigning it, and sitting down upon a bench in the kitchen with his ten fingers sleepily twisting in his hair.

Halloa here! Now then! Show yourselves. That'll do. It's not you. Don't disturb yourself any more! So on, through a labyrinth of airless rooms, each man responding, like a wild beast, to the keeper who has tamed him, and who goes into his cage. What, you haven't found him, then? says Deputy, when we came down. A woman mysteriously sitting up all night in the dark by the smouldering ashes of the kitchen fire, says it's only tramps and cadgers here; it's gonophs over the way. A man, mysteriously walking about the kitchen all night in the dark, bids her hold her tongue. We come out. Deputy fastens the door and goes to bed again.

Black and Green, you know Bark, lodging-house keeper and receiver of stolen goods?—O yes, Inspector Field.—Go to Bark's next.

Bark sleeps in an inner wooden hutch, near his street-door. As we parley on the step with Bark's deputy, Bark growls in his bed. We enter, and Bark flies out of bed. Bark is a red villain and a wrathful, with a sanguine throat that looks very much as if it were expressly made for hanging, as he stretches it out, in pale defiance, over the half-door of his hutch. Bark's parts of speech are of an awful sort—principally adjectives. I won't, says Bark, have no adjective police and adjective strangers in my adjective premises! I won't, by adjective and substantive! Give me my trousers, and I'll send the whole adjective police to adjective and substantive! Give me, says Bark,

my adjective trousers! I'll put an adjective knife in the whole bileing of 'em. I'll punch their adjective heads. I'll rip up their adjective substantives. Give me my adjective trousers! says Bark, and I'll spile the bileing of 'em.

Now, Bark, what's the use of this? Here's Black and Green, Detective Sergeant, and Inspector Field. You know we will come in.—I know you won't! says Bark. Somebody give me my adjective trousers! Bark's trousers seem difficult to find. He calls for them as Hercules might for his club. Give me my adjective trousers! says Bark, and I'll spile the bileing of 'em.

Inspector Field holds that it's all one whether Bark likes the visit or don't like it. He, Inspector Field, is an Inspector of the Detective Police, Detective Sergeant *is* Detective Sergeant, Black and Green are constables in uniform. Don't you be a fool, Bark, or you know it will be the worse for you.—I don't care, says Bark. Give me my adjective trousers!

At two o'clock in the morning, we descend into Bark's low kitchen, leaving Bark to foam at the mouth above, and Imperturbable Black and Green to look at him. Bark's kitchen is crammed full of thieves, holding a *conversazione* there by lamp-light. It is by far the most dangerous assembly we have seen yet. Stimulated by the ravings of Bark, above, their looks are sullen, but not a man speaks. We ascend again. Bark has got his trousers, and is in a state of madness in the passage with his back against a door that shuts off the upper staircase. We observe, in other respects, a ferocious individuality in Bark. Instead of "STOP THIEF!" on his linen, he prints "STOLEN FROM BARK'S!"

Now, Bark, we are going upstairs!—No, you ain't!—You refuse admission to the Police, do you, Bark?—Yes, I do! I refuse it to all the adjective police, and to all the adjective substantives. If the adjective coves in the kitchen was men, they'd come up now, and do for you! Shut me that there door! says Bark, and suddenly we are enclosed in the passage. They'd come up and do for you! cries Bark, and waits. Not a sound in the kitchen! They'd come up and do for you! cries Bark again, and waits. Not a sound in the kitchen! We are shut up, half-a-dozen of us, in Bark's house in the innermost recesses of the worst

part of London, in the dead of the night—the house is crammed with notorious robbers and ruffians—and not a man stirs. No, Bark. They know the weight of the law, and they know Inspector Field and Co. too well.

We leave bully Bark to subside at leisure out of his passion and his trousers, and, I dare say, to be inconveniently reminded of this little brush before long. Black and Green do ordinary duty here, and look serious.

As to White, who waits on Holborn Hill to show the courts that are eaten out of Rotten Gray's Inn Lane, where other lodging-houses are, and where (in one blind alley) the Thieves' Kitchen and Seminary for the teaching of the art to children, is, the night has so worn away, being now

> almost at odds with morning, which is which,

that they are quiet, and no light shines through the chinks in the shutters. As undistinctive Death will come here, one day, sleep comes now. The wicked cease from troubling sometimes, even in this life.

OUR WATERING-PLACE.

In the Autumn-time of the year, when the great metropolis is so much hotter, so much noisier, so much more dusty or so much more water-carted, so much more crowded, so much more disturbing and distracting in all respects, than it usually is, a quiet sea-beach becomes indeed a blessed spot. Half awake and half asleep, this idle morning in our sunny window on the edge of a chalk-cliff in the old-fashioned watering-place to which we are a faithful resorter, we feel a lazy inclination to sketch its picture.

The place seems to respond. Sky, sea, beach, and village, lie as still before us as if they were sitting for the picture. It is dead low-water. A ripple plays among the ripening corn upon the cliff, as if it were faintly trying from recollection to imitate the sea; and the world of butterflies hovering over the crop of radish-seed are as restless in their little way as the gulls are in their larger manner when the wind blows. But the ocean lies winking in the sunlight like a drowsy lion—its glassy waters scarcely curve upon the shore—the fishing-boats in the tiny harbour

are all stranded in the mud—our two colliers (our watering-place has a maritime trade employing that amount of shipping) have not an inch of water within a quarter of a mile of them, and turn, exhausted, on their sides, like faint fish of an antediluvian species. Rusty cables and chains, ropes and rings, undermost parts of posts and piles and confused timber-defences against the waves, lie strewn about, in a brown litter of tangled sea-weed and fallen cliff which looks as if a family of giants had been making tea here for ages, and had observed an untidy custom of throwing their tea-leaves on the shore.

In truth, our watering-place itself has been left somewhat high and dry by the tide of years. Concerned as we are for its honour, we must reluctantly admit that the time when this pretty little semi-circular sweep of houses tapering off at the end of the wooden pier into a point in the sea, was a gay place, and when the lighthouse overlooking it shone at daybreak on company dispersing from public balls, is but dimly traditional now. There is a bleak chamber in our watering-place which is yet called the Assembly "Rooms," and understood to be available on hire for balls or concerts; and, some few seasons since, an ancient little gentleman came down and stayed at the hotel, who said that he had danced there, in bygone ages, with the Honourable Miss Peepy, well known to have been the Beauty of her day and the cruel occasion of innumerable duels. But he was so old and shrivelled, and so very rheumatic in the legs, that it demanded more imagination than our watering-place can usually muster, to believe him; therefore, except the Master of the "Rooms" (who to this hour wears knee-breeches, and who confirmed the statement with tears in his eyes), nobody did believe in the little lame old gentleman, or even in the Honourable Miss Peepy, long deceased.

As to subscription balls in the Assembly Rooms of our watering-place now red-hot cannon balls are less improbable. Sometimes, a misguided wanderer of a Ventriloquist, or an Infant Phenomenon, or a Juggler, or somebody with an Orrery that is several stars behind the times, takes the place for a night, and issues bills with the name of his last town lined out, and the name of ours ignominiously written in, but you may be sure this never happens twice to the same unfortunate person. On such occasions the dis-

coloured old Billiard Table that is seldom played at (unless the ghost of the Honourable Miss Peepy plays at pool with other ghosts) is pushed into a corner, and benches are solemnly constituted into front seats, back seats, and reserved seats—which are much the same after you have paid—and a few dull candles are lighted—wind permitting—and the performer and the scanty audience play out a short match which shall make the other most low-spirited—which is usually a drawn game. After that, the performer instantly departs with maledictory expressions, and is never heard of more.

But the most wonderful feature of our Assembly Rooms, is, that an annual sale of "Fancy and other China," is announced here with mysterious constancy and perseverance. Where the china comes from, where it goes to, why it is annually put up to auction when nobody ever thinks of bidding for it, how it comes to pass that it is always the same china, whether it would not have been cheaper, with the sea at hand, to have thrown it away, say in eighteen hundred and thirty, are standing enigmas. Every year the bills come out, every year the Master of the Rooms gets into a little pulpit on a table, and offers it for sale, every year nobody buys it, every year it is put away somewhere till next year, when it appears again as if the whole thing were a new idea. We have a faint remembrance of an unearthly collection of clocks, purporting to be the work of Parisian and Genevese artists—chiefly bilious-faced clocks, supported on sickly white crutches, with their pendulums dangling like lame legs—to which a similar course of events occurred for several years, until they seemed to lapse away, of mere imbecility.

Attached to our Assembly Rooms is a library. There is a wheel of fortune in it, but it is rusty and dusty, and never turns. A large doll, with movable eyes, was put up to be raffled for, by five-and-twenty members at two shillings, seven years ago this autumn, and the list is not full yet. We are rather sanguine, now, that the raffle will come off next year. We think so, because we only want nine members, and should only want eight, but for number two having grown up since her name was entered, and withdrawn it when she was married. Down the street, there is a toy-ship of considerable burden, in the same condition. Two of the boys who were entered for that raffle

have gone to India in real ships, since; and one was shot, and died in the arms of his sister's lover, by whom he sent his last words home.

This is the library for the Minerva Press. If you want that kind of reading, come to our watering-place. The leaves of the romances, reduced to a condition very like curl-paper, are thickly studded with notes in pencil: sometimes complimentary, sometimes jocose. Some of these commentators, like commentators in a more extensive way, quarrel with one another. One young gentleman who sarcastically writes "O!!!" after every sentimental passage, is pursued through his literary career by another, who writes "Insulting Beast!" Miss Julia Mills has read the whole collection of these books. She has left marginal notes on the pages, as "Is not this truly touching? J. M." "How thrilling! J. M." "Entranced here by the Magician's potent spell. J. M." She has also italicised her favourite traits in the description of the hero, as "his hair which was *dark* and *wavy*, clustered in *rich profusion* around a *marble brow*, whose lofty paleness bespoke the intellect within." It reminds her of another hero. She adds, "How like B. L. Can this be mere coincidence? J. M."

You would hardly guess which is the main street of our watering-place, but you may know it by its being always stopped up with donkey-chaises. Whenever you come here, and see harnessed donkeys eating clover out of barrows drawn completely across a narrow thoroughfare, you may be quite sure you are in our High Street. Our Police you may know by his uniform, likewise by his never on any account interfering with anybody—especially the tramps and vagabonds. In our fancy shops we have a capital collection of damaged goods, among which the flies of countless summers "have been roaming." We are great in obsolete seals, and in faded pincushions, and in rickety camp-stools, and in exploded cutlery, and in miniature vessels, and in stunted little telescopes, and in objects made of shells that pretend not to be shells. Diminutive spades, barrows, and baskets, are our principal articles of commerce; but even they don't look quite new somehow. They always seem to have been offered and refused somewhere else, before they came down to our watering-place.

Yet, it must not be supposed that our watering-place is

an empty place, deserted by all visitors except a few staunch persons of approved fidelity. On the contrary, the chances are that if you came down here in August or September, you wouldn't find a house to lay your head in. As to finding either house or lodging of which you could reduce the terms, you could scarcely engage in a more hopeless pursuit. For all this, you are to observe that every season is the worst season ever known, and that the household population of our watering-place are ruined regularly every autumn. They are like the farmers, in regard that it is surprising how much ruin they will bear. We have an excellent hotel—capital baths, warm, cold, and shower—first-rate bathing machines—and as good butchers, bakers, and grocers, as heart could desire. They all do business, it is to be presumed, from motives of philanthropy—but it is quite certain that they are all being ruined. Their interest in strangers, and their politeness under ruin, bespeak their amiable nature. You would say so, if you only saw the baker helping a new comer to find suitable apartments.

So far from being at a discount as to company, we are in fact what would be popularly called rather a nobby place. Some tip-top "Nobbs" come down occasionally—even Dukes and Duchesses. We have known such carriages to blaze among the donkey-chaises, as made beholders wink. Attendant on these equipages come resplendent creatures in plush and powder, who are sure to be stricken disgusted with the indifferent accommodation of our watering-place, and who, of an evening (particularly when it rains), may be seen very much out of drawing, in rooms far too small for their fine figures, looking discontentedly out of little back windows into bye-streets. The lords and ladies get on well enough and quite good-humouredly: but if you want to see the gorgeous phenomena who wait upon them at a perfect non-plus, you should come and look at the resplendent creatures with little back parlours for servants' halls, and turn-up bedsteads to sleep in, at our watering-place. You have no idea how they take it to heart.

We have a pier—a queer old wooden pier, fortunately without the slightest pretensions to architecture, and very picturesque in consequence. Boats are hauled up upon it, ropes are coiled all over it; lobster-pots, nets, masts, oars, spars, sails, ballast, and rickety capstans, make a perfect

labyrinth of it. For ever hovering about this pier, with their hands in their pockets, or leaning over the rough bulwark it opposes to the sea, gazing through telescopes which they carry about in the same profound receptacles, are the Boatmen of our watering-place. Looking at them, you would say that surely these must be the laziest boatmen in the world. They lounge about, in obstinate and inflexible pantaloons that are apparently made of wood, the whole season through. Whether talking together about the shipping in the Channel, or gruffly unbending over mugs of beer at the public-house, you would consider them the slowest of men. The chances are a thousand to one that you might stay here for ten seasons, and never see a boatman in a hurry. A certain expression about his loose hands, when they are not in his pockets, as if he were carrying a considerable lump of iron in each, without any inconvenience, suggests strength, but he never seems to use it. He has the appearance of perpetually strolling—running is too inappropriate a word to be thought of—to seed. The only subject on which he seems to feel any approach to enthusiasm, is pitch. He pitches everything he can lay hold of,—the pier, the palings, his boat, his house,—when there is nothing else left he turns to and even pitches his hat, or his rough-weather clothing. Do not judge him by deceitful appearances. These are among the bravest and most skilful mariners that exist. Let a gale arise and swell into a storm, let a sea run that might appal the stoutest heart that ever beat, let the Light-boat on these dangerous sands throw up a rocket in the night, or let them hear through the angry roar the signal-guns of a ship in distress, and these men spring up into activity so dauntless, so valiant, and heroic, that the world cannot surpass it. Cavillers may object that they chiefly live upon the salvage of valuable cargoes. So they do, and God knows it is no great living that they get out of the deadly risks they run. But put that hope of gain aside. Let these rough fellows be asked, in any storm, who volunteers for the life-boat to save some perishing souls, as poor and empty-handed as themselves, whose lives the perfection of human reason does not rate at the value of a farthing each; and that boat will be manned, as surely and as cheerfully, as if a thousand pounds were told down on the weather-beaten pier. For this, and for the recollection of their

comrades whom we have known, whom the raging sea has engulfed before their children's eyes in such brave efforts, whom the secret sand has buried, we hold the boatmen of our watering-place in our love and honour, and are tender of the fame they well deserve.

So many children are brought down to our watering-place that, when they are not out of doors, as they usually are in fine weather, it is wonderful where they are put: the whole village seeming much too small to hold them under cover. In the afternoons, you see no end of salt and sandy little boots drying on upper window-sills. At bathing-time in the morning, the little bay re-echoes with every shrill variety of shriek and splash—after which, if the weather be at all fresh, the sand teems with small blue mottled legs. The sands are the children's great resort. They cluster there, like ants: so busy burying their particular friends, and making castles with infinite labour which the next tide overthrows, that it is curious to consider how their play, to the music of the sea, foreshadows the realities of their after lives.

It is curious, too, to observe a natural ease of approach that there seems to be between the children and the boatmen. They mutually make acquaintance, and take individual likings, without any help. You will come upon one of those slow heavy fellows sitting down patiently mending a little ship for a mite of a boy, whom he could crush to death by throwing his lightest pair of trousers on him. You will be sensible of the oddest contrast between the smooth little creature, and the rough man who seems to be carved out of hard-grained wood—between the delicate hand expectantly held out, and the immense thumb and finger that can hardly feel the rigging of thread they mend—between the small voice and the gruff growl—and yet there is a natural propriety in the companionship: always to be noted in confidence between a child and a person who has any merit of reality and genuineness: which is admirably pleasant.

We have a preventive station at our watering-place, and much the same thing may be observed—in a lesser degree, because of their official character—of the coast blockade; a steady, trusty, well-conditioned, well-conducted set of men, with no misgiving about looking you full in the face, and with a quiet thorough-going way of passing along to

their duty at night, carrying huge sou-wester clothing in reserve, that is fraught with all good prepossession. They are handy fellows—neat about their houses—industrious at gardening—would get on with their wives, one thinks, in a desert island—and people it, too, soon.

As to the naval officer of the station, with his hearty fresh face, and his blue eye that has pierced all kinds of weather, it warms our hearts when he comes into church on a Sunday, with that bright mixture of blue coat, buff waistcoat, black neck-kerchief, and gold epaulette, that is associated in the minds of all Englishmen with brave, unpretending, cordial, national service. We like to look at him in his Sunday state; and if we were First Lord (really possessing the indispensable qualification for the office of knowing nothing whatever about the sea), we would give him a ship to-morrow.

We have a church, by the bye, of course—a hideous temple of flint, like a great petrified haystack. Our chief clerical dignitary, who, to his honour, has done much for education both in time and money, and has established excellent schools, is a sound, shrewd, healthy gentleman, who has got into little occasional difficulties with the neighbouring farmers, but has had a pestilent trick of being right. Under a new regulation, he has yielded the church of our watering-place to another clergyman. Upon the whole we get on in church well. We are a little bilious sometimes, about these days of fraternisation, and about nations arriving at a new and more unprejudiced knowledge of each other (which our Christianity don't quite approve), but it soon goes off, and then we get on very well.

There are two dissenting chapels, besides, in our small watering-place; being in about the proportion of a hundred and twenty guns to a yacht. But the dissension that has torn us lately, has not been a religious one. It has arisen on the novel question of Gas. Our watering-place has been convulsed by the agitation, Gas or No Gas. It was never reasoned why No Gas, but there was a great No Gas party. Broadsides were printed and stuck about—a startling circumstance in our watering-place. The No Gas party rested content with chalking "No Gas!" and "Down with Gas!" and other such angry war-whoops, on the few back gates and scraps of wall which the limits of our watering-place afford; but the Gas party printed and posted bills,

wherein they took the high ground of proclaiming against the No Gas party, that it was said Let there be light and there was light; and that not to have light (that is gas-light) in our watering-place, was to contravene the great decree. Whether by these thunderbolts or not, the No Gas party were defeated; and in this present season we have had our handful of shops illuminated for the first time. Such of the No Gas party, however, as have got shops, remain in opposition and burn tallow—exhibiting in their windows the very picture of the sulkiness that punishes itself, and a new illustration of the old adage about cutting off your nose to be revenged on your face, in cutting off their gas to be revenged on their business.

Other population than we have indicated, our watering-place has none. There are a few old used-up boatmen who creep about in the sunlight with the help of sticks, and there is a poor imbecile shoemaker who wanders his lonely life away among the rocks, as if he were looking for his reason—which he will never find. Sojourners in neighbouring watering-places come occasionally in flys to stare at us, and drive away again as if they thought us very dull; Italian boys come, Punch comes, the Fantoccini come, the Tumblers come, the Ethiopians come; Glee-singers come at night, and hum and vibrate (not always melodiously) under our windows. But they all go soon, and leave us to ourselves again. We once had a travelling Circus and Wombwell's Menagerie at the same time. They both know better than ever to try it again; and the Menagerie had nearly razed us from the face of the earth in getting the elephant away—his caravan was so large, and the watering-place so small. We have a fine sea, wholesome for all people; profitable for the body, profitable for the mind. The poet's words are sometimes on its awful lips:

> And the stately ships go on
> To their haven under the hill;
> But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still!
>
> Break, break, break,
> At the foot of thy crags, O sea!
> But the tender grace of a day that is dead
> Will never come back to me.

Yet it is not always so, for the speech of the sea is various, and wants not abundant resource of cheerfulness, hope,

and lusty encouragement. And since I have been idling at the window here, the tide has risen. The boats are dancing on the bubbling water: the colliers are afloat again; the white-bordered waves rush in; the children

> Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
> When he comes back;

the radiant sails are gliding past the shore, and shining on the far horizon; all the sea is sparkling, heaving, swelling up with life and beauty, this bright morning.

A FLIGHT.

When Don Diego de—I forget his name—the inventor of the last new Flying Machines, price so many francs for ladies, so many more for gentlemen—when Don Diego, by permission of Deputy Chaff Wax and his noble band, shall have taken out a Patent for the Queen's dominions, and shall have opened a commodious Warehouse in an airy situation; and when all persons of any gentility will keep at least a pair of wings, and be seen skimming about in every direction; I shall take a flight to Paris (as I soar round the world) in a cheap and independent manner. At present, my reliance is on the South Eastern Railway Company, in whose Express Train here I sit, at eight of the clock on a very hot morning, under the very hot roof of the Terminus at London Bridge, in danger of being "forced" like a cucumber or a melon, or a pine-apple—And talking of pine-apples, I suppose there never were so many pine-apples in a Train as there appear to be in this Train.

Whew! The hot-house air is faint with pine-apples. Every French citizen or citizeness is carrying pine-apples home. The compact little Enchantress in the corner of my carriage (French actress, to whom I yielded up my heart under the auspices of that brave child, "Mrat-chell," at the St. James's Theatre the night before last) has a pine-apple in her lap. Compact Enchantress's friend, confidante, mother, mystery, Heaven knows what, has two pine-apples in her lap, and a bundle of them under the seat. Tobacco-smoky Frenchman in Algerine wrapper, with

peaked hood behind, who might be Abd-el-Kader dyed rifle-green, and who seems to be dressed entirely in dirt and braid, carries pine-apples in a covered basket. Tall, grave, melancholy Frenchman, with black Vandyke beard, and hair close-cropped, with expansive chest to waistcoat, and compressive waist to coat: saturnine as to his pantaloons, calm as to his feminine boots, precious as to his jewellery, smooth and white as to his linen: dark-eyed, high-foreheaded, hawk-nosed—got up, one thinks, like Lucifer or Mephistopheles, or Zamiel, transformed into a highly genteel Parisian—has the green end of a pine-apple sticking out of his neat valise.

Whew! If I were to be kept here long, under this forcing-frame, I wonder what would become of me—whether I should be forced into a giant, or should sprout or blow into some other phenomenon! Compact Enchantresss is not ruffled by the heat—she is always composed, always compact. O look at her little ribbons, frills, and edges, at her shawl, at her gloves, at her hair, at her bracelets, at her bonnet, at everything about her! How is it accomplished! What does she do to be so neat? How is it that every trifle she wears belongs to her, and cannot choose but be a part of her? And even Mystery, look at *her!* A model. Mystery is not young, not pretty, though still of an average candle-light passability; but she does such miracles in her own behalf, that, one of these days, when she dies, they'll be amazed to find an old woman in her bed, distantly like her. She was an actress once, I shouldn't wonder, and had a Mystery attendant on herself. Perhaps, Compact Enchantress will live to be a Mystery, and to wait with a shawl at the side-scenes, and to sit opposite to Mademoiselle in railway carriages, and smile and talk subserviently, as Mystery does now. That's hard to believe!

Two Englishmen, and now our carriage is full. First Englishman, in the monied interest—flushed, highly respectable — Stock Exchange, perhaps — City, certainly. Faculties of second Englishman entirely absorbed in hurry. Plunges into the carriage, blind. Calls out of window concerning his luggage, deaf. Suffocates himself under pillows of great-coats, for no reason, and in a demented manner. Will receive no assurance from any porter whatsoever. Is stout and hot, and wipes his head, and makes himself hotter by breathing so hard. Is totally incredulous

respecting assurance of Collected Guard, that "there's no hurry." No hurry! And a flight to Paris in eleven hours!

It is all one to me in this drowsy corner, hurry or no hurry. Until Don Diego shall send home my wings, my flight is with the South Eastern Company. I can fly with the South Eastern, more lazily, at all events, than in the upper air. I have but to sit here thinking as idly as I please, and be whisked away. I am not accountable to anybody for the idleness of my thoughts in such an idle summer flight; my flight is provided for by the South Eastern and is no business of mine.

The bell! With all my heart. It does not require *me* to do so much as even to flap my wings. Something snorts for me, something shrieks for me, something proclaims to everything else that it had better keep out of my way,—and away I go.

Ah! The fresh air is pleasant after the forcing-frame, though it does blow over these interminable streets, and scatter the smoke of this vast wilderness of chimneys. Here we are—no, I mean there we were, for it has darted far into the rear—in Bermondsey where the tanners live. Flash! The distant shipping in the Thames is gone. Whirr! The little streets of new brick and red tile, with here and there a flagstaff growing like a tall weed out of the scarlet beans, and, everywhere, plenty of open sewer and ditch for the promotion of the public health, have been fired off in a volley. Whizz! Dust-heaps, market-gardens, and waste grounds. Rattle! New Cross Station. Shock! There we were at Croydon. Bur-r-r-r! The tunnel.

I wonder why it is that when I shut my eyes in a tunnel I begin to feel as if I were going at an Express pace the other way. I am clearly going back to London now. Compact Enchantress must have forgotten something, and reversed the engine. No! After long darkness, pale fitful streaks of light appear. I am still flying on for Folkestone. The streaks grow stronger—become continuous—become the ghost of day—become the living day—became I mean—the tunnel is miles and miles away, and here I fly through sunlight, all among the harvest and the Kentish hops.

There is a dreamy pleasure in this flying. I wonder

where it was, and when it was, that we exploded, blew into space somehow, a Parliamentary Train, with a crowd of heads and faces looking at us out of cages, and some hats waving. Monied Interest says it was at Reigate Station. Expounds to Mystery how Reigate Station is so many miles from London, which Mystery again develops to Compact Enchantress. There might be neither a Reigate nor a London for me, as I fly away among the Kentish hops and harvest. What do *I* care?

Bang! We have let another Station off, and fly away regardless. Everything is flying. The hop-gardens turn gracefully towards me, presenting regular avenues of hops in rapid flight, then whirl away. So do the pools and rushes, haystacks, sheep, clover in full bloom delicious to the sight and smell, corn-sheaves, cherry-orchards, apple-orchards, reapers, gleaners, hedges, gates, fields that taper off into little angular corners, cottages, gardens, now and then a church. Bang, bang! A double-barrelled Station! Now a wood, now a bridge, now a landscape, now a cutting, now a—— Bang! a single-barrelled Station—there was a cricket-match somewhere with two white tents, and then four flying cows, then turnips—now the wires of the electric telegraph are all alive, and spin, and blurr their edges, and go up and down, and make the intervals between each other most irregular: contracting and expanding in the strangest manner. Now we slacken. With a screwing, and a grinding, and a smell of water thrown on ashes, now we stop!

Demented Traveller, who has been for two or three minutes watchful, clutches his great-coats, plunges at the door, rattles it, cries "Hi!" eager to embark on board of impossible packets, far inland. Collected Guard appears. "Are you for Tunbridge, sir?" "Tunbridge? No. Paris." "Plenty of time, sir. No hurry. Five minutes here, sir, for refreshment." I am so blest (anticipating Zamiel, by half a second) as to procure a glass of water for Compact Enchantress.

Who would suppose we had been flying at such a rate, and shall take wing again directly? Refreshment-room full, platform full, porter with watering-pot deliberately cooling a hot wheel, another porter with equal deliberation helping the rest of the wheels bountifully to ice cream. Monied Interest and I re-entering the carriage first, and

being there alone, he intimates to me that the French are "no go" as a Nation. I ask why? He says, that Reign of Terror of theirs was quite enough. I ventured to inquire whether he remembers anything that preceded said Reign of Terror? He says not particularly. "Because," I remark, "the harvest that is reaped, has sometimes been sown." Monied Interest repeats, as quite enough for him, that the French are revolutionary,—"and always at it."

Bell. Compact Enchantress, helped in by Zamiel, (whom the stars confound!) gives us her charming little side-box look, and smites me to the core. Mystery eating sponge-cake. Pine-apple atmosphere faintly tinged with suspicions of sherry. Demented Traveller flits past the carriage, looking for it. Is blind with agitation, and can't see it. Seems singled out by Destiny to be the only unhappy creature in the flight, who has any cause to hurry himself. Is nearly left behind. Is seized by Collected Guard after the Train is in motion, and bundled in. Still, has lingering suspicions that there must be a boat in the neighbourhood, and *will* look wildly out of window for it.

Flight resumed. Corn-sheaves, hop-gardens, reapers, gleaners, apple-orchards, cherry-orchards, Stations single and double-barrelled, Ashford. Compact Enchantress (constantly talking to Mystery, in an exquisite manner) gives a little scream; a sound that seems to come from high up in her precious little head; from behind her bright little eyebrows. "Great Heaven, my pine-apple! My Angel! It is lost!" Mystery is desolated. A search made. It is not lost. Zamiel finds it. I curse him (flying) in the Persian manner. May his face be turned upside down, and Jackasses sit upon his uncle's grave!

Now fresher air, now glimpses of unenclosed Down-land with flapping crows flying over it whom we soon outfly, now the Sea, now Folkestone at a quarter after ten. "Tickets ready, gentlemen!" Demented dashes at the door. "For Paris, sir?" No hurry.

Not the least. We are dropped slowly down to the Port, and sidle to and fro (the whole Train) before the insensible Royal George Hotel, for some ten minutes. The Royal George takes no more heed of us than its namesake under water at Spithead, or under earth at Windsor, does. The Royal George's dog lies winking and blinking at us, without taking the trouble to sit up; and the Royal George's

"wedding party" at the open window (who seem, I must say, rather tired of bliss) don't bestow a solitary glance upon us, flying thus to Paris in eleven hours. The first gentleman in Folkestone is evidently used up, on this subject.

Meanwhile, Demented chafes. Conceives that every man's hand is against him, and exerting itself to prevent his getting to Paris. Refuses Consolation. Rattles door. Sees smoke on the horizon, and "knows" it's the boat gone without him. Monied Interest resentfully explains that *he* is going to Paris too. Demented signifies that if Monied Interest chooses to be left behind, *he* don't.

"Refreshments in the Waiting-Room, ladies and gentlemen. No hurry, ladies and gentlemen, for Paris. No hurry whatever!"

Twenty minutes' pause, by Folkestone clock, for looking at Enchantress while she eats a sandwich, and at Mystery while she eats of everything there that is eatable, from pork-pie, sausage, jam, and gooseberries, to lumps of sugar. All this time, there is a very waterfall of luggage, with a spray of dust, tumbling slant-wise from the pier into the steamboat. All this time, Demented (who has no business with it) watches it with starting eyes, fiercely requiring to be shown *his* luggage. When it at last concludes the cataract, he rushes hotly to refresh—is shouted after, pursued, jostled, brought back, pitched into the departing steamer upside down, and caught by mariners disgracefully.

A lovely harvest day, a cloudless sky, a tranquil sea. The piston-rods of the engines so regularly coming up from below, to look (as well they may) at the bright weather, and so regularly almost knocking their iron heads against the cross beam of the skylight, and never doing it! Another Parisian actress is on board, attended by another Mystery. Compact Enchantress greets her sister artist—Oh, the Compact One's pretty teeth!—and Mystery greets Mystery. *My* Mystery soon ceases to be conversational—is taken poorly, in a word, having lunched too miscellaneously—and goes below. The remaining Mystery then smiles upon the sister artists (who, I am afraid, wouldn't greatly mind stabbing each other), and is upon the whole ravished.

And now I find that all the French people on board begin to grow, and all the English people to shrink. The

French are nearing home, and shaking off a disadvantage, whereas we are shaking it on. Zamiel is the same man, and Abd-el-Kader is the same man, but each seems to come into possession of an indescribable confidence that departs from us—from Monied Interest, for instance, and from me. Just what they gain, we lose. Certain British "Gents" about the steersman, intellectually nurtured at home on parody of everything and truth of nothing, become subdued, and in a manner forlorn; and when the steersman tells them (not exultingly) how he has "been upon this station now eight year, and never see the old town of Bullum yet," one of them, with an imbecile reliance on a reed, asks him what he considers to be the best hotel in Paris?

Now, I tread upon French ground, and am greeted by the three charming words, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, painted up (in letters a little too thin for their height) on the Custom-house wall—also by the sight of large cocked hats, without which demonstrative head-gear nothing of a public nature can be done upon this soil. All the rabid Hotel population of Boulogne howl and shriek outside a distant barrier, frantic to get at us. Demented, by some unlucky means peculiar to himself, is delivered over to their fury, and is presently seen struggling in a whirlpool of Touters—is somehow understood to be going to Paris—is, with infinite noise, rescued by two cocked hats, and brought into Custom-house bondage with the rest of us.

Here, I resign the active duties of life to an eager being, of preternatural sharpness with a shelving forehead and a shabby snuff-coloured coat, who (from the wharf) brought me down with his eye before the boat came into port. He darts upon my luggage, on the floor where all the luggage is strewn like a wreck at the bottom of the great deep; gets it proclaimed and weighed as the property of "Monsieur a traveller unknown;" pays certain francs for it, to a certain functionary behind a Pigeon Hole, like a pay-box at a Theatre (the arrangements in general are on a wholesale scale, half military and half theatrical); and I suppose I shall find it when I come to Paris—he says I shall. I know nothing about it, except that I pay him his small fee, and pocket the ticket he gives me, and sit upon a counter, involved in the general distraction.

Railway station. "Lunch or dinner, ladies and gentle-

men. Plenty of time for Paris. Plenty of time!" Large hall, long counter, long strips of dining-table, bottles of wine, plates of meat, roast chickens, little loaves of bread, basins of soup, little caraffes of brandy, cakes, and fruit. Comfortably restored from these resources, I begin to fly again.

I saw Zamiel (before I took wing) presented to Compact Enchantress and Sister Artist, by an officer in uniform, with a waist like a wasp's, and pantaloons like two balloons. They all got into the next carriage together, accompanied by the two Mysteries. They laughed. I am alone in the carriage (for I don't consider Demented anybody) and alone in the world.

Fields, windmills, low grounds, pollard-trees, windmills, fields, fortifications, Abbeville, soldiering and drumming. I wonder where England is, and when I was there last—about two years ago, I should say. Flying in and out among these trenches and batteries, skimming the clattering drawbridges, looking down into the stagnant ditches, I become a prisoner of state, escaping. I am confined with a comrade in a fortress. Our room is in an upper story. We have tried to get up the chimney, but there's an iron grating across it, imbedded in the masonry. After months of labour, we have worked the grating loose with the poker, and can lift it up. We have also made a hook, and twisted our rugs and blankets into ropes. Our plan is, to go up the chimney, hook our ropes to the top, descend hand over hand upon the roof of the guard-house far below, shake the hook loose, watch the opportunity of the sentinel's pacing away, hook again, drop into the ditch, swim across it, creep into the shelter of the wood. The time is come—a wild and stormy night. We are up the chimney, we are on the guard-house roof, we are swimming in the murky ditch, when lo! "Qui v'là?" a bugle, the alarm, a crash! What is it? Death? No, Amiens.

More fortifications, more soldiering and drumming, more basins of soup, more little loaves of bread, more bottles of wine, more caraffes of brandy, more time for refreshment. Everything good, and everything ready. Bright, unsubstantial-looking, scenic sort of station. People waiting. Houses, uniforms, beards, moustaches, some sabots, plenty of neat women, and a few old-visaged children. Unless it be a delusion born of my giddy flight, the grown-up peo-

ple and the children seem to change places in France. In general, the boys and girls are little old men and women, and the men and women lively boys and girls.

Bugle, shriek, flight resumed. Monied Interest has come into my carriage. Says the manner of refreshing is "not bad," but considers it French. Admits great dexterity and politeness in the attendants. Thinks a decimal currency may have something to do with their despatch in settling accounts, and don't know but what it's sensible and convenient. Adds, however, as a general protest, that they're a revolutionary people—and always at it.

Ramparts, canals, cathedral, river, soldiering and drumming, open country, river, earthenware manufactures, Creil. Again ten minutes. Not even Demented in a hurry. Station, a drawing-room with a verandah: like a planter's house. Monied Interest considers it a band-box, and not made to last. Little round tables in it, at one of which the Sister Artists and attendant Mysteries are established with Wasp and Zamiel, as if they were going to stay a week.

Anon, with no more trouble than before, I am flying again, and lazily wondering as I fly. What has the South Eastern done with all the horrible little villages we used to pass through, in the *Diligence?* What have they done with all the summer dust, with all the winter mud, with all the dreary avenues of little trees, with all the ramshackle postyards, with all the beggars (who used to turn out at night with bits of lighted candle, to look in at the coach windows), with all the long-tailed horses who were always biting one another, with all the big postilions in jack-boots—with all the mouldy cafés that we used to stop at, where a long mildewed tablecloth, set forth with jovial bottles of vinegar and oil, and with a Siamese arrangement of pepper and salt, was never wanting? Where are the grass-grown little towns, the wonderful little market-places all unconscious of markets, the shops that nobody kept, the streets that nobody trod, the churches that nobody went to, the bells that nobody rang, the tumble-down old buildings plastered with many-colored bills that nobody read? Where are the two-and-twenty weary hours of long long day and night journey, sure to be either insupportably hot or insupportably cold? Where are the pains in my bones, where are the fidgets in my legs, where is the Frenchman

with the nightcap who never *would* have the little coupé window down, and who always fell upon me when he went to sleep, and always slept all night snoring onions?

A voice breaks in with "Paris! Here we are!"

I have overflown myself, perhaps, but I can't believe it. I feel as if I were enchanted or bewitched. It is barely eight o'clock yet—it is nothing like half-past—when I have had my luggage examined at that briskest of Custom-houses attached to the station, and am rattling over the pavement in a hackney-cabriolet.

Surely, not the pavement of Paris? Yes, I think it is, too. I don't know any other place where there are all these high houses, all these haggard-looking wine shops, all these billiard tables, all these stocking-makers with flat red or yellow legs of wood for signboard, all these fuel shops with stacks of billets painted outside, and real billets sawing in the gutter, all these dirty corners of streets, all these cabinet pictures over dark doorways representing discreet matrons nursing babies. And yet this morning—I'll think of it in a warm-bath.

Very like a small room that I remember in the Chinese baths upon the Boulevard, certainly; and, though I see it through the steam, I think that I might swear to that peculiar hot-linen basket, like a large wicker hour-glass. When can it have been that I left home? When was it that I paid "through to Paris" at London Bridge, and discharged myself of all responsibility, except the preservation of a voucher ruled into three divisions, of which the first was snipped off at Folkestone, the second aboard the boat, and the third taken at my journey's end? It seems to have been ages ago. Calculation is useless. I will go out for a walk.

The crowds in the streets, the lights in the shops and balconies, the elegance, variety, and beauty of their decorations, the number of the theatres, the brilliant cafés with their windows thrown up high and their vivacious groups at little tables on the pavement, the light and glitter of the houses turned as it were inside out, soon convince me that it is no dream; that I am in Paris, howsoever I got here. I stroll down to the sparkling Palais Royal, up the Rue de Rivoli, to the Place Vendôme. As I glance into a print-shop window, Monied Interest, my late travelling companion, comes upon me, laughing with the highest relish of

disdain. "Here's a people!" he says, pointing to Napoleon in the window and Napoleon on the column. "Only one idea all over Paris! A monomania!" Humph! I THINK I have seen Napoleon's match? There WAS a statue, when I came away, at Hyde Park Corner, and another in the City, and a print or two in the shops.

I walk up to the Barrière de l'Etoile, sufficiently dazed by my flight to have a pleasant doubt of the reality of everything about me; of the lively crowd, the overhanging trees, the performing dogs, the hobby-horses, the beautiful perspectives of shining lamps: the hundred and one enclosures, where the singing is, in gleaming orchestras of azure and gold, and where a star-eyed Houri comes round with a box for voluntary offerings. So, I pass to my hotel, enchanted; sup, enchanted; go to bed, enchanted; pushing back this morning (if it really were this morning) into the remoteness of time, blessing the South Eastern Company for realising the Arabian Nights in these prose days, murmuring, as I wing my idle flight into the land of dreams, "No hurry, ladies and gentlemen, going to Paris in eleven hours. It is so well done, that there really is no hurry!"

OUR SCHOOL.

WE went to look at it, only this last Midsummer, and found that the Railway had cut it up root and branch. A great trunk-line had swallowed the playground, sliced away the schoolroom, and pared off the corner of the house: which, thus curtailed of its proportions, presented itself, in a green stage of stucco, profilewise towards the road, like a forlorn flat-iron without a handle, standing on end.

It seems as if our schools were doomed to be the sport of change. We have faint recollections of a Preparatory Day-School, which we have sought in vain, and which must have been pulled down to make a new street, ages ago. We have dim impressions, scarcely amounting to a belief, that it was over a dyer's shop. We know that you went up steps to it; that you frequently grazed your knees in doing so; that you generally got your leg over the scraper, in trying to scrape the mud off a very unsteady little shoe.

The mistress of the Establishment holds no place in our memory; but, rampant on one eternal door-mat, in an eternal entry long and narrow, is a puffy pug-dog, with a personal animosity towards us, who triumphs over Time. The bark of that baleful Pug, a certain radiating way he had of snapping at our undefended legs, the ghastly grinning of his moist black muzzle and white teeth, and the insolence of his crisp tail curled like a pastoral crook, all live and flourish. From an otherwise unaccountable association of him with a fiddle, we conclude that he was of French extraction, and his name *Fidèle*. He belonged to some female, chiefly inhabiting a back-parlour, whose life appears to us to have been consumed in sniffing, and in wearing a brown beaver bonnet. For her, he would sit up and balance cake upon his nose, and not eat it until twenty had been counted. To the best of our belief we were once called in to witness this performance; when, unable, even in his milder moments, to endure our presence, he instantly made at us, cake and all.

Why a something in mourning, called "Miss Frost," should still connect itself with our preparatory school, we are unable to say. We retain no impression of the beauty of Miss Frost—if she were beautiful; or of the mental fascinations of Miss Frost—if she were accomplished; yet her name and her black dress hold an enduring place in our remembrance. An equally impersonal boy, whose name has long since shaped itself unalterably into "Master Mawls," is not to be dislodged from our brain. Retaining no vindictive feeling towards Mawls—no feeling whatever, indeed—we infer that neither he nor we can have loved Miss Frost. Our first impression of Death and Burial is associated with this formless pair. We all three nestled awfully in a corner one wintry day, when the wind was blowing shrill, with Miss Frost's pinafore over our heads; and Miss Frost told us in a whisper about somebody being "screwed down." It is the only distinct recollection we preserve of these impalpable creatures, except a suspicion that the manners of Master Mawls were susceptible of much improvement. Generally speaking, we may observe that whenever we see a child intently occupied with its nose, to the exclusion of all other subjects of interest, our mind reverts, in a flash, to Master Mawls.

But, the School that was Our School before the Railroad

came and overthrew it, was quite another sort of place. We were old enough to be put into Virgil when we went there, and to get Prizes for a variety of polishing on which the rust has long accumulated. It was a School of some celebrity in its neighbourhood—nobody could have said why—and we had the honour to attain and hold the eminent position of first boy. The master was supposed among us to know nothing, and one of the ushers was supposed to know everything. We are still inclined to think the first-named supposition perfectly correct.

We have a general idea that its subject had been in the leather trade, and had bought us—meaning Our School—of another proprietor who was immensely learned. Whether this belief had any real foundation, we are not likely ever to know now. The only branches of education with which he showed the least acquaintance, were, ruling and corporally punishing. He was always ruling ciphering-books with a bloated mahogany ruler, or smiting the palms of offenders with the same diabolical instrument, or viciously drawing a pair of pantaloons tight with one of his large hands, and caning the wearer with the other. We have no doubt whatever that this occupation was the principal solace of his existence.

A profound respect for money pervaded Our School, which was, of course, derived from its Chief. We remember an idiotic goggle-eyed boy, with a big head and half-crowns without end, who suddenly appeared as a parlour-boarder, and was rumoured to have come by sea from some mysterious part of the earth where his parents rolled in gold. He was usually called "Mr." by the Chief, and was said to feed in the parlour on steaks and gravy; likewise to drink currant wine. And he openly stated that if rolls and coffee were ever denied him at breakfast, he would write home to that unknown part of the globe from which he had come, and cause himself to be recalled to the regions of gold. He was put into no form or class, but learnt alone, as little as he liked—and he liked very little—and there was a belief among us that this was because he was too wealthy to be "taken down." His special treatment, and our vague association of him with the sea, and with storms, and sharks, and Coral Reefs occasioned the wildest legends to be circulated as his history. A tragedy in blank verse was written on the subject—if our

memory does not deceive us, by the hand that now chronicles these recollections—in which his father figured as Pirate, and was shot for a voluminous catalogue of atrocities: first imparting to his wife the secret of the cave in which his wealth was stored, and from which his only son's half-crowns now issued. Dumbledon (the boy's name) was represented as "yet unborn" when his brave father met his fate; and the despair and grief of Mrs. Dumbledon at that calamity was movingly shadowed forth as having weakened the parlour-boarder's mind. This production was received with great favour, and was twice performed with closed doors in the dining-room. But, it got wind, and was seized as libellous, and brought the unlucky poet into severe affliction. Some two years afterwards, all of a sudden one day, Dumbledon vanished. It was whispered that the Chief himself had taken him down to the Docks, and reshipped him for the Spanish Main; but nothing certain was ever known about his disappearance. At this hour, we cannot thoroughly disconnect him from California.

Our School was rather famous for mysterious pupils. There was another—a heavy young man, with a large double-cased silver watch, and a fat knife the handle of which was a perfect tool-box—who unaccountably appeared one day at a special desk of his own, erected close to that of the Chief, with whom he held familiar converse. He lived in the parlour, and went out for his walks, and never took the least notice of us—even of us, the first boy—unless to give us a deprecatory kick, or grimly to take our hat off and throw it away, when he encountered us out of doors, which unpleasant ceremony he always performed as he passed—not even condescending to stop for the purpose. Some of us believed that the classical attainments of this phenomenon were terrific, but that his penmanship and arithmetic were defective, and he had come there to mend them; others, that he was going to set up a school, and had paid the Chief "twenty-five pound down," for leave to see Our School at work. The gloomier spirits even said that he was going to buy us; against which contingency, conspiracies were set on foot for a general defection and running away. However, he never did that. After staying for a quarter, during which period, though closely observed, he was never seen to do anything but make pens out of quills, write small hand in a secret portfolio, and

punch the point of the sharpest blade in his knife into his desk all over it, he too disappeared, and his place knew him no more.

There was another boy, a fair, meek boy, with a delicate complexion and rich curling hair, who, we found out, or thought we found out (we have no idea now, and probably had none then, on what grounds, but it was confidentially revealed from mouth to mouth), was the son of a Viscount who had deserted his lovely mother. It was understood that if he had his rights, he would be worth twenty thousand a year. And that if his mother ever met his father, she would shoot him with a silver pistol, which she carried, always loaded to the muzzle, for that purpose. He was a very suggestive topic. So was a young Mulatto, who was always believed (though very amiable) to have a dagger about him somewhere. But, we think they were both outshone, upon the whole, by another boy who claimed to have been born on the twenty-ninth of February, and to have only one birthday in five years. We suspect this to have been a fiction—but he lived upon it all the time he was at Our School.

The principal currency of Our School was slate pencil. It had some inexplicable value, that was never ascertained, never reduced to a standard. To have a great hoard of it, was somehow to be rich. We used to bestow it in charity, and confer it as a precious boon upon our chosen friends. When the holidays were coming, contributions were solicited for certain boys whose relatives were in India, and who were appealed for under the generic name of "Holiday-stoppers,"—appropriate marks of remembrance that should enliven and cheer them in their homeless state. Personally, we always contributed these tokens of sympathy in the form of slate pencil, and always felt that it would be a comfort and a treasure to them.

Our School was remarkable for white mice. Red-polls, linnets, and even canaries, were kept in desks, drawers, hat-boxes, and other strange refuges for birds; but white mice were the favourite stock. The boys trained the mice, much better than the masters trained the boys. We recall one white mouse, who lived in the cover of a Latin dictionary, who ran up ladders, drew Roman chariots, shouldered muskets, turned wheels, and even made a very creditable appearance on the stage as the Dog of Montargis. He

might have achieved greater things, but for having the misfortune to mistake his way in a triumphal procession to the Capitol, when he fell into a deep inkstand, and was dyed black and drowned. The mice were the occasion of some most ingenious engineering, in the construction of their houses and instruments of performance. The famous one belonged to a company of proprietors, some of whom have since made Railroads, Engines, and Telegraphs; the chairman has erected mills and bridges in New Zealand.

The usher at Our School, who was considered to know everything as opposed to the Chief, who was considered to know nothing, was a bony, gentle-faced, clerical-looking young man in rusty black. It was whispered that he was sweet upon one of Maxby's sisters (Maxby lived close by, and was a day pupil), and further that he "favoured Maxby." As we remember, he taught Italian to Maxby's sisters on half-holidays. He once went to the play with them, and wore a white waistcoat and a rose: which was considered among us equivalent to a declaration. We were of opinion on that occasion, that to the last moment he expected Maxby's father to ask him to dinner at five o'clock, and therefore neglected his own dinner at half-past one, and finally got none. We exaggerated in our imaginations the extent to which he punished Maxby's father's cold meat at supper; and we agreed to believe that he was elevated with wine and water when he came home. But, we all liked him; for he had a good knowledge of boys, and would have made it a much better school if he had had more power. He was writing master, mathematical master, English master, made out the bills, mended the pens, and did all sorts of things. He divided the little boys with the Latin master (they were smuggled through their rudimentary books, at odd times when there was nothing else to do), and he always called at parents' houses to inquire after sick boys, because he had gentlemanly manners. He was rather musical, and on some remote quarter-day had bought an old trombone; but a bit of it was lost, and it made the most extraordinary sounds when he sometimes tried to play it of an evening. His holidays never began (on account of the bills) until long after ours; but, in the summer vacations he used to take pedestrian excursions with a knapsack; and at Christmas time, he went to see his father at Chipping Norton, who we all said (on no au-

thority) was a dairy-fed-pork-butcher. Poor fellow! He was very low all day on Maxby's sister's wedding-day, and afterwards was thought to favour Maxby more than ever, though he had been expected to spite him. He has been dead these twenty years. Poor fellow!

Our remembrance of Our School presents the Latin master as a colourless doubled-up near-sighted man with a crutch, who was always cold, and always putting onions into his ears for deafness, and always disclosing ends of flannel under all his garments, and almost always applying a ball of pocket-handkerchief to some part of his face with a screwing action round and round. He was a very good scholar, and took great pains where he saw intelligence and a desire to learn: otherwise, perhaps not. Our memory presents him (unless teased into a passion) with as little energy as colour—as having been worried and tormented into monotonous feebleness—as having had the best part of his life ground out of him in a Mill of boys. We remember with terror how he fell asleep one sultry afternoon with the little smuggled class before him, and awoke not when the footstep of the Chief fell heavy on the floor; how the Chief aroused him, in the midst of a dread silence, and said, "Mr. Blinkins, are you ill, sir?" how he blushingly replied, "Sir, rather so;" how the Chief retorted with severity, "Mr. Blinkins, this is no place to be ill in" (which was very, very true), and walked back solemn as the ghost in Hamlet, until, catching a wandering eye, he caned that boy for inattention, and happily expressed his feelings towards the Latin master through the medium of a substitute.

There was a fat little dancing-master who used to come in a gig, and taught the more advanced among us hornpipes (as an accomplishment in great social demand in after life); and there was a brisk little French master who used to come in the sunniest weather, with a handleless umbrella, and to whom the Chief was always polite, because (as we believed), if the Chief offended him, he would instantly address the Chief in French, and for ever confound him before the boys with his inability to understand or reply.

There was besides, a serving man, whose name was Phil. Our retrospective glance presents Phil as a shipwrecked carpenter, cast away upon the desert island of a school, and carrying into practice an ingenious inkling of many trades.

He mended whatever was broken, and made whatever was wanted. He was general glazier, among other things, and mended all the broken windows—at the prime cost (as was darkly rumoured among us) of ninepence, for every square charged three-and-six to parents. We had a high opinion of his mechanical genius, and generally held that the Chief "knew something bad of him," and on pain of divulgence enforced Phil to be his bondsman. We particularly remember that Phil had a sovereign contempt for learning; which engenders in us a respect for his sagacity, as it implies his accurate observation of the relative positions of the Chief and the ushers. He was an impenetrable man, who waited at table between whiles, and throughout "the half" kept the boxes in severe custody. He was morose, even to the Chief, and never smiled, except at breaking-up, when, in acknowledgment of the toast, "Success to Phil! Hooray!" he would slowly carve a grin out of his wooden face, where it would remain until we were all gone. Nevertheless, one time when we had the scarlet fever in the school, Phil nursed all the sick boys of his own accord, and was like a mother to them.

There was another school not far off, and of course Our School could have nothing to say to that school. It is mostly the way with schools, whether of boys or men. Well! the railway has swallowed up ours, and the locomotives now run smoothly over its ashes.

> So fades and languishes, grows dim and dies,
> All that this world is proud of,

—and is not proud of, too. It had little reason to be proud of Our School, and has done much better since in that way, and will do far better yet.

* A CURIOUS DANCE ROUND A CURIOUS TREE.

On the 13th of January, 1750—when the corn that grew near Moorfields was ground on the top of Windmill Hill, "Fensbury"; when Bethlehem Hospital was "a dry walk for loiterers," and a show; when lunatics were chained, naked, in rows of cages that flanked a promenade, and were wondered and jeered at through iron bars by London loungers—Sir Thomas Ladbroke the banker, Bonnel Thornton the wit, and half-a-dozen other gentlemen, met together to found a new asylum for the insane. Towards this object they put down, before separating, one guinea each. In a year from that time the windmill had been given to the winds, and on its ancient site, there stood a hospital for the gratuitous treatment of the insane poor.

With the benevolence which thus originated an additional madhouse, was mixed, as was usual in that age, a curious degree of unconscious cruelty. Coercion for the outward man, and rabid physicking for the inward man, were then the specifics for lunacy. Chains, straw, filthy solitude, darkness, and starvation; jalap, syrup of buckthorn, tartarised antimony, and ipecacuanha administered every spring and fall in fabulous doses to every patient, whether well or ill; spinning in whirligigs, corporal punishment, gagging, "continued intoxication"; nothing was too wildly extravagant, nothing too monstrously cruel to be prescribed by mad-doctors. It was their monomania; and, under their influence, the directors of Lunatic Asylums acted. In other respects these physicians were grave men, of mild dispositions, and—in their ample-flapped, ample-cuffed coats, with a certain gravity and air of state in the skirts; with their large buttons and gold-headed canes, their hair-powder and ruffles—were men of benevolent aspects. Imagine one of them turning back his lace and tightening his wig to supply a maniac who *would* keep his mouth shut, with food or physic. He employed a flat oval ring, with a handle to it. "The head being placed between the knees of the operator, the patient, blinded and

properly secured, an opportunity is watched. When he opens his mouth to speak, the instrument is thrust in and allows the food or medicine to be introduced without difficulty. A sternutatory of any kind" (say a pepper-caster of cayenne, or half an ounce of rappee) "always forces the mouth open, in spite of the patient's determination to keep it shut." "In cases of great fury and violence," says the amiable practitioner from whom I quote, "the patient should be kept in a dark room, confined by one leg, with metallic manacles on the wrist; the skin being less liable to be injured,"—here the Good Doctor becomes especially considerate and mild,—"the skin being less liable to be injured by the friction of polished metal than by that of linen or cotton."

These practitioners of old would seem to have been, without knowing it, early homœopathists; their motto must have been, *Similia similibus curantur;* they believed that the most violent and certain means of driving a man mad, were the only hopeful means of restoring him to reason. The inside of the new hospital, therefore, even when, in 1782, it was removed, under the name of "Saint Luke's," from Windmill Hill to its present site in the Old Street Road, must have appeared, to the least irrational new patient, like a collection of chambers of horrors. What sane person indeed, seeing, on his entrance into any place, gyves and manacles (however highly polished) yawning for his ankles and wrists; swings dangling in the air, to spin him round like an impaled cockchafer; gags and strait-waistcoats ready at a moment's notice to muzzle and bind him; would be likely to retain the perfect command of his senses? Even now, an outside view of Saint Luke's Hospital is gloomy enough; and, when on that cold misty, cheerless afternoon which followed Christmas Day, I looked up at the high walls, and saw, grimly peering over them, its upper stories and dismal little iron-bound windows, I did not ring the porter's bell (albeit I was only a visitor and free to go, if I would, without ringing it at all) in the most cheerful frame of mind.

How came I, it may be asked, on the day after Christmas Day, of all days in the year, to be hovering outside Saint Luke's, after dark, when I might have betaken myself to that jocund world of Pantomime, where there is no affliction or calamity that leaves the least impression; where a

man may tumble into the broken ice, or dive into the kitchen fire, and only be the droller for the accident; where babies may be knocked about and sat upon, or choked with gravy spoons in the process of feeding, and yet no Coroner be wanted, nor anybody made uncomfortable; where workmen may fall from the top of a house to the bottom, or even from the bottom of a house to the top, and sustain no injury to the brain, need no hospital, leave no young children; where every one, in short, is so superior to all the accidents of life, though encountering them at every turn, that I suspect this to be the secret (though many persons may not present it to themselves) of the general enjoyment which an audience of vulnerable spectators, liable to pain and sorrow, find in this class of entertainment.

Not long before the Christmas Night in question, I had been told of a patient in Saint Luke's, a woman of great strength and energy, who had been driven mad by an infuriated ox in the streets—an inconvenience not in itself worth mentioning, for which the inhabitants of London are frequently indebted to their inestimable Corporation. She seized the creature literally by the horns, and so, as long as limb and life were in peril, vigorously held him; but, the danger over, she lost her senses, and became one of the most ungovernable of the inmates of the asylum. Why was I there to see this poor creature, when I might have seen a Pantomimic woman gored to any extent by a Pantomimic ox, at any height of ferocity, and have gone home to bed with the comforting assurance that she had rather enjoyed it than otherwise?

The reason of my choice was this. I had received a notification that on that night there would be, in Saint Luke's, "a Christmas Tree for the Patients." And further, that the usual "fortnightly dancing" would take place before the distribution of the gifts upon the tree. So there I was, in the street, looking about for a knocker and finding none.

There was a line of hackney cabriolets by the dead wall; some of the drivers, asleep; some, vigilant; some, with their legs not inexpressive of "Boxing," sticking out of the open doors of their vehicles, while their bodies were reposing on the straw within. There were flaming gaslights, oranges, oysters, paper lanterns, butchers and grocers, bakers and public-houses, over the way; there were

omnibuses rattling by; there were ballad-singers, street cries, street passengers, street beggars, and street music; there were cheap theatres within call, which you would do better to be at some pains to improve, my worthy friends, than to shut up—for, if you will not have them with your own consent at their best, you may be sure that you *must* have them, without it, at their worst; there were wretched little chapels too, where the officiating prophets certainly were not inspired with grammar; there were homes, great and small, by the hundred thousand, east, west, north and south; all the busy ripple of sane life (or of life, as sane as it ever is) came murmuring on from far away, and broke against the blank walls of the Madhouse, like a sea upon a desert shore.

Abandoning further search for the non-existent knocker, I discovered and rang the bell, and gained admission into Saint Luke's—through a stone courtyard and a hall, adorned with wreaths of holly and like seasonable garniture. I felt disposed to wonder how it looked to patients when they were first received, and whether they distorted it to their own wild fancies, or left it a matter of fact. But, as there was time for a walk through the building before the festivities began, I discarded idle speculation and followed my leader.

Into a long, long gallery: on one side, a few windows; on the other, a great many doors leading to sleeping cells. Dead silence—not utter solitude; for, outside the iron cage enclosing the fireplace between two of the windows, stood a motionless woman. The fire cast a red glare upon the walls, upon the ceiling, and upon the floor, polished by the daily friction of many feet. At the end of the gallery, the common sitting-room. Seated on benches around another caged fireplace, several women: all silent, except one. She, sewing a mad sort of seam, and scolding some imaginary person.

(Taciturnity is a symptom of nearly every kind of mania, unless under pressure of excitement. Although the whole lives of some patients are passed together in the same apartment, they are passed in solitude; there is no solitude more complete.) Forms and tables, the only furniture. Nothing in the rooms to remind their inmates of the world outside. No domestic articles to occupy, to interest, or to entice the mind away from its malady. Utter vacuity.

Except the scolding woman sewing a purposeless seam, every patient in the room either silently looking at the fire, or silently looking on the ground—or rather through the ground, and at Heaven knows what, beyond.

It was a relief to come to a work-room; with coloured prints over the mantel-shelf, and china shepherdesses upon it; furnished also with tables, a carpet, stuffed chairs, and an open fire. I observed a great difference between the demeanour of the occupants of this apartment and that of the inmates of the other room. They were neither so listless nor so sad. Although they did not, while I was present, speak much, they worked with earnestness and diligence. A few noticed my going away, and returned my parting salutation. In a niche—not in a room—but at one end of a cheerless gallery—stood a pianoforte, with a few ragged music-leaves upon the desk. Of course, the music was turned upside down.

Several such galleries on the "female side"; all exactly alike. One, set apart for "boarders" who are incurable; and, towards whose maintenance their friends are required to pay a small weekly sum. The experience of this aslyum did not differ, I found, from that of similar establishments, in proving that insanity is more prevalent among women than among men. Of the eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifty-nine inmates Saint Luke's Hospital has received in the century of its existence, eleven thousand one hundred and sixty-two have been women, and seven thousand five hundred and eighty-seven men. Female servants are, as is well known, more frequently afflicted with lunacy than any other class of persons. The table, published in the Directors' Report, of the condition in life of the one hundred and seven female inmates admitted in 1850, sets forth that while, under the vague description of "wife of labourer" there were only nine admissions, and under the equally indefinite term "housekeeper," no more than six; there were of women servants, twenty-four.

I passed into one of the galleries on the male side. Three men, engaged at a game of bagatelle; another patient kneeling against the wall apparently in deep prayer; two, walking rapidly up and down the long gallery arm-in-arm, but, as usual, without speaking together; a handsome young man deriving intense gratification from the motion of his fingers as he played with them in the air; two men

standing like pillars before the fire-cage; one man, with a newspaper under his arm, walking with great rapidity from one end of the corridor to the other, as if engaged in some important mission which admitted of not a moment's delay. The only furniture in the common sitting-room not peculiar to a prison or a lunatic asylum of the old school, was a newspaper, which was being read by a demented publican. The same oppressive silence—except when the publican complained, in tones of the bitterest satire, against one of the keepers, or (said the publican) "attendant, as I suppose I must call him." The same listless vacuity here, as in the room occupied by the female patients. Despite the large amount of cures effected in the hospital (upwards of sixty-nine per cent during the past year), testifying to the general efficacy of the treatment pursued in it, I think that, if the system of finding the inmates employment, so successful in other hospitals, were introduced into Saint Luke's, the proportion of cures would be much greater. Appended to the latest report of the charity is a table of the weights of the new-comers, compared with the weights of the same individuals when discharged. From this, it appears that their inactivity occasions a rapid accumulation of flesh. Of thirty patients, whose average residence in the hospital extended over eleven weeks, twenty-nine had gained at the average rate of more than one pound per week, each. This can hardly be a gain of health.

On the walls of some of the sleeping cells were the marks of what looked like small alcoves, that had been removed. These indicated the places to which the chairs, which patients were made to sit in for indefinite periods, were, in the good old times, nailed. A couple of these chairs have been preserved in a lumber-room, and are hideous curiosities indeed. As high as the seat, are boxes to enclose the legs, which used to be shut in with spring bolts. The thighs were locked down by a strong cross-board, which also served as a table. The back of this cramping prison is so constructed that the victim could only use his arms and hands in a forward direction; not backward or sideways.

Each sleeping cell has two articles of furniture—a bed and a stool; the latter serving instead of a wardrobe. Many of the patients sleep in single-bedded rooms; but the larger cells are occupied by four inmates. The bedding is comfortable, and the clothing ample. On one bed-

place the clothes were folded up, and the bedding had been removed. In its stead, was a small bundle, made up of a pair of boots, a waistcoat, and some stockings. "*That* poor fellow," said my conductor, "died last night—in a fit."

As I was looking at the marks in the walls of the galleries, of the posts to which the patients were formerly chained, sounds of music were heard from a distance. The ball had begun, and we hurried off in the direction of the music.

It was playing in another gallery—a brown sombre place, not brilliantly illuminated by a light, at either end, adorned with holly. The staircase by which this gallery was approached, was curtained off at the top, and near the curtain the musicians were cheerfully engaged in getting all the vivacity that could be got, out of their two instruments. At one end were a number of mad men, at the other, a number of mad women, seated on forms. Two or three sets of quadrille dancers were arranged down the centre, and the ball was proceeding with great spirit, but with great decorum.

There were the patients usually to be found in all such asylums, among the dancers. There was the brisk, vain pippin-faced little old lady, in a fantastic cap—proud of her foot and ankle; there was the old-young woman, with the dishevelled long light hair, spare figure, and weird gentility; there was the vacantly laughing girl, requiring now and then a warning finger to admonish her; there was the quiet young woman, almost well, and soon going out. For partners, there were the sturdy, bull-necked, thick-set, little fellow who had tried to get away last week; the wry-faced tailor, formerly suicidal, but much improved; the suspicious patient with a countenance of gloom, wandering round and round strangers, furtively eyeing them behind from head to foot, and not indisposed to resent their intrusion. There was the man of happy silliness, pleased with everything. But the only chain that made any clatter was Ladies' Chain, and there was no straiter waistcoat in company than the polka-garment of the old-young woman with the weird gentility, which was of a faded black satin, and languished through the dance with a love-lorn affability and condescension to the force of circumstances, in itself a faint reflection of all Bedlam.

Among those seated on the forms, the usual loss of social habits and the usual solitude in society, were again to be observed. It was very remarkable to see how they huddled together without communicating; how some watched the dancing with lack-lustre eyes, scarcely seeming to know what they watched; how others rested weary heads on hands, and moped; how others had the air of eternally expecting some miraculous visitor who never came, and looking out for some deliverances that never happened. The last figure of the set danced out, the women-dancers instantly returned to their station at one end of the gallery, the men-dancers repaired to *their* station at the other; and all were shut up within themselves in a moment.

The dancers were not all patients. Among them, and dancing with right good will, were attendants, male and female—pleasant looking men, not at all realising the conventional idea of "keepers"—and pretty women, gracefully though not at all inappropriately dressed, and with looks and smiles as sparkling as one might hope to see in any dance in any place. Also, there were sundry bright young ladies who had helped to make the Christmas Tree; and a few members of the resident-officer's family; and, shining above them all, and shining everywhere, his wife; whose clear head and strong heart Heaven inspired to have no Christmas wish beyond this place, but to look upon it as her home, and on its inmates as her afflicted children. And may I see as seasonable a sight as that gentle Christian lady every Christmas that I live, and leave its counterpart in as fair a form in many a nook and corner in the world, to shine, like a star in a dark spot, through all the Christmases to come!

The tree was in a bye room by itself, not lighted yet, but presently to be displayed in all its glory. The porter of the Institution, a brisk young fellow with no end of dancing in him, now proclaimed a song. The announcement being received with loud applause, one of the dancing sisterhood of attendants sang the song, which the musicians accompanied. It was very pretty, and we all applauded to the echo, and seemed (the mad part of us, I mean) to like our share in the applause prodigiously, and to take it as a capital point, that we were led by the popular porter. It was so great a success that we very soon called for another song and then we danced a country

dance (Porter perpetually going down the middle and up again with Weird-gentility), until the quaint pictures of the Founders, hanging in the adjacent committee-chamber, might have trembled in their frames.

The moment the dance was over, away the porter ran, not in the least out of breath, to help light up the tree. Presently it stood in the centre of its room, growing out of the floor, a blaze of light and glitter; blossoming in that place (as the story goes of the American aloe) for the first time in a hundred years. O shades of mad Doctors with laced ruffles and powdered wigs, O shades of patients who went mad in the only good old times to be mad or sane in, and who were therefore physicked, whirligigged, chained, handcuffed, beaten, cramped, and tortured, look from

> Wherever in your sightless substance
> You wait . . .

on this outlandish weed in the degenerate garden of Saint Luke's!

To one coming freshly from outer life, unused to such scenes, it was a very sad and touching spectacle, when the patients were admitted in a line, to pass round the lighted tree, and admire. I could not but remember with what happy, hopefully flushed faces, the brilliant toy was associated in my usual knowledge of it, and compare them with the worn cheek, the listless stare, the dull eye raised for a moment and then confusedly dropped, the restless eagerness, the moody surprise, so different from the sweet expectancy and astonishment of children, that came in melancholy array before me. And when the sorrowful procession was closed by "Tommy," the favourite of the house, the harmless old man, with a giggle and a chuckle and a nod for every one, I think I would have rather that Tommy had charged at the tree like a Bull, than that Tommy had been, at once so childish and so dreadfully un-childlike.

We all went out into the gallery again after this survey, and the dazzling fruits of the tree were taken from their boughs, and distributed. The porter, an undeveloped genius in stage management and mastership of ceremonies, was very active in the distribution, blew all the whistles, played all the trumpets, and nursed all the dolls. That done, we had a wonderful concluding dance, compounded of a country dance and galopade, during which all the pop-

ular couples were honoured with a general clapping of hands, as they galoped down the middle; and the porter in particular was overwhelmed with plaudits. Finally we had God Save the Queen, with the whole force of the company; solo parts by the female attendant with the pretty voice who had sung before; chorus led, with loyal animation, by the porter. When I came away, the porter, surrounded by bearers of trays and busy in the midst of the forms, was delivering out mugs and cake, like a banker dealing at a colossal round game. I dare say he was asleep before I got home; but I left him in that stage of social briskness which is usually described among people who are at large as "beginning to spend the evening."

Now, there is doubtless a great deal that is mournfully affecting in such a sight. I close this little record of my visit with the statement that the fact is so, because I am not sure but that many people expect far too much. I have known some, after visiting the noblest of our Institutions for this terrible calamity, express their disappointment at the many deplorable cases they had observed with pain, and hint that, after all, the better system could do little. Something of what it can do, and daily does, has been faintly shadowed forth, even in this paper. Wonderful things have been done for the Blind, and for the Deaf and Dumb; but, the utmost is necessarily far inferior to the restoration of the senses of which they are deprived. To lighten the affliction of insanity by all human means, is not to restore the greatest of the Divine gifts; and those who devote themselves to the task do not pretend that it is. They find their sustainment and reward in the substitution of humanity for brutality, kindness for maltreatment, peace for raging fury; in the acquisition of love instead of hatred; and in the knowledge, that, from such treatment, improvement, and hope of final restoration will come, if such hope be possible. It may be little to have abolished from madhouses all that is abolished, and to have substituted all that is substituted. Nevertheless, reader, if you can do a little in any good direction—do it. It will be much, some day.

A PLATED ARTICLE.

PUTTING up for the night in one of the chiefest towns of Staffordshire, I find it to be by no means a lively town. In fact is as dull and dead a town as any one could desire not to see. It seems as if its whole population might be imprisoned in its Railway Station. The Refreshment-Room at that Station is a vortex of dissipation compared with the extinct town-inn, the Dodo, in the dull High Street.

Why High Street! Why not rather Low Street, Flat Street, Low-Spirited Street, Used-up Street? Where are the people who belong to the High Street? Can they all be dispersed over the face of the country, seeking the unfortunate Strolling Manager who decamped from the mouldy little Theatre last week, in the beginning of his season (as his play-bills testify), repentantly resolved to bring him back, and feed him, and be entertained? Or, can they all be gathered to their fathers in the two old churchyards near to the High Street—retirement into which churchyards appears to be a mere ceremony, there is so very little life outside their confines, and such small discernible difference between being buried alive in the town, and buried dead in the town tombs? Over the way, opposite to the staring blank bow windows of the Dodo, are a little ironmonger's shop, a little tailor's shop (with a picture of the Fashions in the small window and a bandy-legged baby on the pavement staring at it)—a watchmaker's shop, where all the clocks and watches must be stopped, I am sure, for they could never have the courage to go, with the town in general, and the Dodo in particular, looking at them. Shade of Miss Linwood, erst of Leicester Square, London, thou art welcome here, and thy retreat is fitly chosen! I myself was one of the last visitors to that awful storehouse of thy life's work, where an anchorite old man and woman took my shilling with a solemn wonder, and conducting me to a gloomy sepulchre of needlework dropping to pieces with dust and age and shrouded in twilight at high noon, left me there, chilled, frightened,

and alone. And now, in ghostly letters on all the dead walls of this dead town, I read thy honoured name, and find that thy Last Supper, worked in Berlin Wool, invites inspection as a powerful excitement!

Where are the people who are bidden with so much cry to this feast of little wool? Where are they? Who are they? They are not the bandy-legged baby studying the fashions in the tailor's window. They are not the two earthy ploughmen lounging outside the saddler's shop, in the stiff square where the Town Hall stands, like a brick and mortar private on parade. They are not the landlady of the Dodo in the empty bar, whose eye had trouble in it and no welcome, when I asked for dinner. They are not the Turnkeys of the Town Jail, looking out of the gateway in their uniforms, as if they had locked up all the balance (as my American friends would say) of the inhabitants, and could now rest a little. They are not the two dusty millers in the white mill down by the river, where the great water-wheel goes heavily round and round, like the monotonous days and nights in this forgotten place. Then who are they, for there is no one else? No; this deponent maketh oath and saith that there is no one else, save and except the waiter at the Dodo, now laying the cloth. I have paced the streets, and stared at the houses, and am come back to the blank bow window of the Dodo; and the town clocks strike seven, and the reluctant echoes seem to cry, "Don't wake us!" and the bandy-legged baby has gone home to bed.

If the Dodo were only a gregarious bird—if he had only some confused idea of making a comfortable nest—I could hope to get through the hours between this and bed-time, without being consumed by devouring melancholy. But, the Dodo's habits are all wrong. It provides me with a trackless desert of sitting-room, with a chair for every day in the year, a table for every month, and a waste of sideboard where a lonely China vase pines in a corner for its mate long departed, and will never make a match with the candlestick in the opposite corner if it live till Doomsday. The Dodo has nothing in the larder. Even now, I behold the Boots returning with my sole in a piece of paper; and with that portion of my dinner, the Boots, perceiving me at the blank bow window, slaps his leg as he comes across the road, pretending it is something else. The Dodo ex-

cludes the outer air. When I mount up to my bed-room, a smell of closeness and flue gets lazily up my nose like sleepy snuff. The loose little bits of carpet writhe under my tread, and take wormy shapes. I don't know the ridiculous man in the looking-glass, beyond having met him once or twice in a dish-cover—and I can never shave *him* to-morrow morning! The Dodo is narrow-minded as to towels; expects me to wash on a freemason's apron without the trimming: when I asked for soap, gives me a stony-hearted something white, with no more lather in it than the Elgin marbles. The Dodo has seen better days, and possesses interminable stables at the back—silent, grass-grown, broken-windowed, horseless.

This mournful bird can fry a sole, however, which is much. Can cook a steak, too, which is more. I wonder where it gets its Sherry? If I were to send my pint of wine to some famous chemist to be analysed, what would it turn out to be made of? It tastes of pepper, sugar, bitter-almonds, vinegar, warm knives, any flat drinks, and a little brandy. Would it unman a Spanish exile by reminding him of his native land at all? I think not. If there really be any townspeople out of the churchyards, and if a caravan of them ever do dine, with a bottle of wine per man, in this desert of the Dodo, it must make good for the doctor next day!

Where was the waiter born? How did he come here? Has he any hope of getting away from here? Does he ever receive a letter, or take a ride upon the railway, or see anything but the Dodo? Perhaps he has seen the Berlin Wool. He appears to have a silent sorrow on him, and it may be that. He clears the table; draws the dingy curtains of the great bow window, which so unwillingly consent to meet, that they must be pinned together; leaves me by the fire with my pint decanter, and a little thin funnel-shaped wine-glass, and a plate of pale biscuits—in themselves engendering desperation.

No book, no newspaper! I left the Arabian Nights in the railway carriage, and have nothing to read but Bradshaw, and "that way madness lies." Remembering what prisoners and shipwrecked mariners have done to exercise their minds in solitude, I repeat the multiplication table, the pence table, and the shilling table: which are all the tables I happen to know. What if I write something?

The Dodo keeps no pens but steel pens; and those I always stick through the paper, and can turn to no other account.

What am I to do? Even if I could have the bandy-legged baby knocked up and brought here, I could offer him nothing but Sherry, and that would be the death of him. He would never hold up his head again if he touched it. I can't go to bed, because I have conceived a mortal hatred for my bedroom; and I can't go away, because there is no train for my place of destination until morning. To burn the biscuits will be but a fleeting joy; still it is a temporary relief, and here they go on the fire! Shall I break the plate? First let me look at the back, and see who made it. COPELAND.

Copeland! Stop a moment. Was it yesterday I visited Copeland's works, and saw them making plates? In the confusion of travelling about, it might be yesterday or it might be yesterday month; but I think it was yesterday. I appeal to the plate. The plate says, decidedly, yesterday. I find the plate, as I look at it, growing into a companion.

Don't you remember (says the plate) how you steamed away, yesterday morning, in the bright sun and the east wind, along the valley of the sparkling Trent? Don't you recollect how many kilns you flew past, looking like the bowls of gigantic tobacco pipes, cut short off from the stem and turned upside down? And the fires—and the smoke—and the roads made with bits of crockery, as if all the plates and dishes in the civilised world had been Macadamised, expressly for the laming of all the horses? Of course I do!

And don't you remember (says the plate) how you alighted at Stoke—a picturesque heap of houses, kilns, smoke, wharfs, canals, and river, lying (as was most appropriate) in a basin—and how, after climbing up the sides of the basin to look at the prospect, you trundled down again at a walking-match pace, and straight proceeded to my father's, Copeland's, where the whole of my family, high and low, rich and poor, are turned out upon the world from our nursery and seminary, covering some fourteen acres of ground? And don't you remember what we spring from:—heaps of lumps of clay, partially prepared and cleaned in Devonshire and Dorsetshire, whence said clay principally comes—and hills of flint, without which we

should want our ringing sound, and should never be musical? And as to the flint, don't you recollect that it is first burnt in kilns, and is then laid under the four iron feet of a demon slave, subject to violent stamping fits, who, when they come on, stamps away insanely with his four iron legs, and would crush all the flint in the Isle of Thanet to powder, without leaving off? And as to the clay, don't you recollect how it is put into mills or teazers, and is sliced, and dug, and cut at, by endless knives, clogged and sticky, but persistent—and is pressed out of that machine through a square trough, whose form it takes—and is cut off in square lumps and thrown into a vat, and there mixed with water, and beaten to a pulp by paddle-wheels—and is then run into a rough house, all rugged beams and ladders splashed with white,—superintended by Grindoff the Miller in his working clothes, all splashed with white,—where it passes through no end of machinery-moved sieves all splashed with white, arranged in an ascending scale of fineness (some so fine, that three hundred silk threads cross each other in a single square inch of their surface), and all in a violent state of ague with their teeth for ever chattering, and their bodies for ever shivering? And as to the flint again, isn't it mashed and mollified and troubled and soothed, exactly as rags are in a paper-mill, until it is reduced to a pap so fine that it contains no atom of "grit" perceptible to the nicest taste? And as to the flint and the clay together, are they not, after all this, mixed in the proportion of five of clay to one of flint, and isn't the compound—known as "slip"—run into oblong troughs, where its superfluous moisture may evaporate; and finally, isn't it slapped and banged and beaten and patted and kneaded and wedged and knocked about like butter, until it becomes a beautiful grey dough, ready for the potter's use?

In regard of the potter, popularly so called (says the plate), you don't mean to say you have forgotten that a workman called a Thrower is the man under whose hand this grey dough takes the shapes of the simpler household vessels as quickly as the eye can follow? You don't mean to say you cannot call him up before you, sitting, with his attendant woman, at his potter's wheel—a disc about the size of a dinner plate, revolving on two drums slowly or quickly as he wills—who made you a complete breakfast set for a bachelor, as a good-humoured little off-hand joke?

You remember how he took up as much dough as he wanted, and, throwing it on his wheel, in a moment fashioned it into a teacup—caught up more clay and made a saucer—a larger dab and whirled it into a teapot—winked at a smaller dab and converted it into the lid of the teapot, accurately fitting by the measurement of his eye alone—coaxed a middle-sized dab for two seconds, broke it, turned it over at the rim, and made a milkpot—laughed, and turned out a slop-basin—coughed, and provided for the sugar? Neither, I think, are you oblivious of the newer mode of making various articles, but especially basins, according to which improvement a mould revolves instead of a disc? For you *must* remember (says the plate) how you saw the mould of a little basin spinning round and round, and how the workman smoothed and pressed a handful of dough upon it, and how with an instrument called a profile (a piece of wood, representing the profile of a basin's foot) he cleverly scraped and carved the ring which makes the base of any such basin, and then took the basin off the lathe like a doughey skull-cap to be dried, and afterwards (in what is called a green state) to be put into a second lathe, there to be finished and burnished with a steel burnisher? And as to moulding in general (says the plate), it can't be necessary for me to remind you that all ornamental articles, and indeed all articles not quite circular, are made in moulds. For you must remember how you saw the vegetable dishes, for example, being made in moulds; and how the handles of teacups, and the spouts of teapots, and the feet of tureens, and so forth, are all made in little separate moulds, and are each stuck on to the body corporate, of which it is destined to form a part, with a stuff called "slag," as quickly as you can recollect it. Further, you learnt—you know you did—in the same visit, how the beautiful sculptures in the delicate new material called Parian, are all constructed in moulds; how, into that material, animal bones are ground up, because the phosphate of lime contained in bones makes it translucent; how everything is moulded, before going into the fire, one-fourth larger than it is intended to come out of the fire, because it shrinks in that proportion in the intense heat; how, when a figure skrinks unequally, it is spoiled—emerging from the furnace a mis-shapen birth; a big head and a little body, or a little head and a big body, or a Quasimodo with long

arms and short legs, or a Miss Biffin with neither legs nor arms worth mentioning.

And as to the Kilns, in which the firing takes place, and in which some of the more precious articles are burnt repeatedly, in various stages of their process towards completion,—as to the Kilns (says the plate, warming with the recollection), if you don't remember THEM with a horrible interest, what did you ever go to Copeland's for? When you stood inside of one of those inverted bowls of a Pre-Adamite tobacco-pipe, looking up at the blue sky through the open top far off, as you might have looked up from a well, sunk under the centre of the pavement of the Pantheon at Rome, had you the least idea where you were? And when you found yourself surrounded, in that dome-shaped cavern, by innumerable columns of an unearthly order of architecture, supporting nothing, and squeezed close together as if a Pre-Adamite Samson had taken a vast Hall in his arms and crushed it into the smallest possible space, had you the least idea what they were? No (says the plate), of course not! And when you found that each of those pillars was a pile of ingeniously made vessels of coarse clay—called Saggers—looking, when separate, like raised-pies for the table of the mighty Giant Blunderbore, and now all full of various articles of pottery ranged in them in baking order, the bottom of each vessel serving for the cover of the one below, and the whole Kiln rapidly filling with these, tier upon tier, until the last workman should have barely room to crawl out, before the closing of the jagged aperture in the wall and the kindling of the gradual fire; did you not stand amazed to think that all the year round these dread chambers are heating, white hot—and cooling—and filling—and emptying—and being bricked up—and broken open—humanly speaking, for ever and ever? To be sure you did! And standing in one of those Kilns nearly full, and seeing a free crow shoot across the aperture a-top, and learning how the fire would wax hotter and hotter by slow degrees, and would cool similarly through a space of from forty to sixty hours, did no remembrance of the days when human clay was burnt oppress you? Yes, I think so! I suspect that some fancy of a fiery haze and a shortening breath, and a growing heat, and a gasping prayer; and a figure in black interposing between you and the sky (as figures in black are very apt to

do), and looking down, before it grew too hot to look and live, upon the Heretic in his edifying agony—I say I suspect (says the plate) that some such fancy was pretty strong upon you when you went out into the air, and blessed God for the bright spring day and the degenerate times!

After that, I needn't remind you what a relief it was to see the simplest process of ornamenting this "biscuit" (as it is called when baked) with brown circles and blue trees—converting it into the common crockery-ware that is exported to Africa, and used in cottages at home. For (says the plate) I am well persuaded that you bear in mind how those particular jugs and mugs were once more set upon a lathe and put in motion; and how a man blew the brown colour (having a strong natural affinity with the material in that condition) on them from a blow-pipe as they twirled; and how his daughter, with a common brush, dropped blotches of blue upon them in the right places; and how, tilting the blotches upside down, she made them run into rude images of trees, and there an end.

And didn't you see (says the plate) planted upon my own brother that astounding blue willow, with knobbed and gnarled trunk, and foliage of blue ostrich feathers, which gives our family the title of "willow pattern?" And didn't you observe, transferred upon him at the same time, that blue bridge which spans nothing, growing out from the roots of the willow; and the three blue Chinese going over it into a blue temple, which has a fine crop of blue bushes sprouting out of the roof; and a blue boat sailing above them, the mast of which is burglariously sticking itself into the foundations of a blue villa, suspended sky-high, surmounted by a lump of blue rock, sky-higher, and a couple of billing blue birds, sky-highest—together with the rest of that amusing blue landscape, which has, in deference to our revered ancestors of the Cerulean Empire, and in defiance of every known law of perspective, adorned millions of our family ever since the days of platters? Didn't you inspect the copper-plate on which my pattern was deeply engraved? Didn't you perceive an impression of it taken in cobalt colour at a cylindrical press, upon a leaf of thin paper, streaming from a plunge-bath of soap and water? Wasn't the paper impression daintily spread, by a light-fingered damsel (you *know* you admired her!),

over the surface of the plate, and the back of the paper rubbed prodigiously hard—with a long tight roll of flannel, tied up like a round of hung beef—without so much as ruffling the paper, wet as it was? Then (says the plate), was not the paper washed away with a sponge, and didn't there appear, set off upon the plate, *this* identical piece of Pre-Raphaelite blue distemper which you now behold? Not to be denied! I had seen all this—and more. I had been shown, at Copeland's, patterns of beautiful design, in faultless perspective, which are causing the ugly old willow to wither out of public favour; and which, being quite as cheap, insinuate good wholesome natural art into the humblest households. When Mr. and Mrs. Sprat have satisfied their material tastes by that equal division of fat and lean which has made their *ménage* immortal; and have, after the elegant tradition, "licked the platter clean," they can—thanks to modern artists in clay—feast their intellectual tastes upon excellent delineations of natural objects.

This reflection prompts me to transfer my attention from the blue plate to the forlorn but cheerfully painted vase on the sideboard. And surely (says the plate) you have not forgotten how the outlines of such groups of flowers as you see there, are printed, just as I was printed, and are afterwards shaded and filled in with metallic colours by women and girls? As to the aristocracy of our order, made of the finer clay—porcelain peers and peeresses;—the slabs, and panels, and table tops, and tazze; the endless nobility and gentry of dessert, breakfast, and tea services; the gemmed perfume bottles, and scarlet and gold salvers; you saw that they were painted by artists, with metallic colours laid on with camel-hair pencils, and afterwards burnt in.

And talking of burning in (says the plate), didn't you find that every subject, from the willow-pattern to the landscape after Turner—having been framed upon clay or porcelain biscuit—has to be glazed? Of course, you saw the glaze—composed of various vitreous materials—laid over every article; and of course you witnessed the close imprisonment of each piece in saggers upon the separate system rigidly enforced by means of fine-pointed earthenware stilts placed between the articles to prevent the slightest communication or contact. We had in my time—and I suppose it is the same now—fourteen hours' firing to fix the glaze and to make it "run" all over us equally, so as to

put a good shiny and unscratchable surface upon us. Doubtless, you observed that one sort of glaze—called printing-body—is burnt into the better sort of ware *before* it is printed. Upon this you saw some of the finest steel engravings transferred, to be fixed by an after glazing—didn't you? Why, of course you did!

Of course I did. I had seen and enjoyed everything that the plate recalled to me, and had beheld with admiration how the rotatory motion which keeps this ball of ours in its place in the great scheme, with all its busy mites upon it, was necessary throughout the process, and could only be dispensed with in the fire. So, listening to the plate's reminders, and musing upon them, I got through the evening after all, and went to bed. I made but one sleep of it—for which I have no doubt I am also indebted to the plate—and left the lonely Dodo in the morning, quite at peace with it, before the bandy-legged baby was up.

OUR HONOURABLE FRIEND.

We are delighted to find that he has got in! Our honourable friend is triumphantly returned to serve in the next Parliament. He is the honourable member for Verbosity—the best represented place in England.

Our honourable friend has issued an address of congratulation to the Electors, which is worthy of that noble constituency, and is a very pretty piece of composition. In electing him, he says, they have covered themselves with glory, and England has been true to herself. (In his preliminary address he had remarked, in a poetical quotation of great rarity, that nought could make us rue, if England to herself did prove but true.)

Our honourable friend delivers a prediction, in the same document, that the feeble minions of a faction will never hold up their heads any more; and that the finger of scorn will point at them in their dejected state, through countless ages of time. Further, that the hireling tools that would destroy the sacred bulwarks of our nationality are unworthy of the name of Englishman; and that so long as the sea shall roll around our ocean-girded isle, so long his

motto shall be, No Surrender. Certain dogged persons of low principles and no intellect, have disputed whether anybody knows who the minions are, or what the faction is, or which are the hireling tools and which the sacred bulwarks, or what it is that is never to be surrendered, and if not, why not? But, our honourable friend the member for Verbosity knows all about it.

Our honourable friend has sat in several parliaments, and given bushels of votes. He is a man of that profundity in the matter of vote-giving, that you never know what he means. When he seems to be voting pure white, he may be in reality voting jet black. When he says Yes, it is just as likely as not—or rather more so—that he means No. This is the statesmanship of our honourable friend. It is in this, that he differs from mere unparliamentary men. *You* may not know what he meant then, or what he means now; but, our honourable friend knows, and did from the first know, both what he meant then, and what he means now; and when he said he didn't mean it then, he did in fact say, that he means it now. And if you mean to say that you did not then, and do not now, know what he did mean then, or does mean now, our honourable friend will be glad to receive an explicit declaration from you whether you are prepared to destroy the sacred bulwarks of our nationality.

Our honourable friend, the member for Verbosity, has this great attribute, that he always means something, and always means the same thing. When he came down to that House and mournfully boasted in his place, as an individual member of the assembled Commons of this great and happy country, that he could lay his hand upon his heart, and solemnly declare that no consideration on earth should induce him, at any time or under any circumstances, to go as far north as Berwick-upon-Tweed; and when he nevertheless, next year, did go to Berwick-upon-Tweed, and even beyond it, to Edinburgh; he had one single meaning, one and indivisible. And God forbid (our honourable friend says) that he should waste another argument upon the man who professes that he cannot understand it! "I do NOT, gentlemen," said our honourable friend, with indignant emphasis and amid great cheering, on one such public occasion. "I do NOT, gentlemen, I am free to confess, envy the feelings of that man whose mind

is so constituted as that he can hold such language to me, and yet lay his head upon his pillow, claiming to be a native of that land,

> Whose march is o'er the mountain-wave,
> Whose home is on the deep!"

(Vehement cheering, and man expelled.)

When our honourable friend issued his preliminary address to the constituent body of Verbosity on the occasion of one particular glorious triumph, it was supposed by some of his enemies, that even he would be placed in a situation of difficulty by the following comparatively trifling conjunction of circumstances. The dozen noblemen and gentlemen whom our honourable friend supported, had "come in," expressly to do a certain thing. Now, four of the dozen said, at a certain place, that they didn't mean to do that thing, and had never meant to do it; another four of the dozen said, at another certain place, that they did mean to do that thing, and had always meant to do it; two of the remaining four said, at two other certain places, that they meant to do half of that thing (but differed about which half), and to do a variety of nameless wonders instead of the other half; and one of the remaining two declared that the thing itself was dead and buried, while the other as strenuously protested that it was alive and kicking. It was admitted that the parliamentary genius of our honourable friend would be quite able to reconcile such small discrepancies as these; but, there remained the additional difficulty that each of the twelve made entirely different statements at different places, and that all the twelve called everything visible and invisible, sacred and profane, to witness, that they were a perfectly impregnable phalanx of unanimity. This, it was apprehended, would be a stumbling-block to our honourable friend.

The difficulty came before our honourable friend, in this way. He went down to Verbosity to meet his free and independent constituents, and to render an account (as he informed them in the local papers) of the trust they had confided to his hands—that trust which it was one of the proudest privileges of an Englishman to possess—that trust which it was the proudest privilege of an Englishman to hold. It may be mentioned as a proof of the great general interest attaching to the contest, that a Lunatic whom no-

body employed or knew, went down to Verbosity with several thousand pounds in gold, determined to give the whole away—which he actually did; and that all the publicans opened their houses for nothing. Likewise, several fighting men, and a patriotic group of burglars sportively armed with life-preservers, proceeded (in barouches and very drunk) to the scene of action at their own expense; these children of nature having conceived a warm attachment to our honourable friend, and intending, in their artless manner, to testify it by knocking the voters in the opposite interest on the head.

Our honourable friend being come into the presence of his constituents, and having professed with great suavity that he was delighted to see his good friend Tipkisson there, in his working dress—his good friend Tipkisson being an inveterate saddler, who always opposes him, and for whom he has a mortal hatred—made them a brisk, ginger-beery sort of speech, in which he showed them how the dozen noblemen and gentlemen had (in exactly ten days from their coming in) exercised a surprisingly beneficial effect on the whole financial condition of Europe, had altered the state of the exports and imports for the current half-year, had prevented the drain of gold, had made all that matter right about the glut of the raw material, and had restored all sorts of balances with which the superseded noblemen and gentlemen had played the deuce—and all this, with wheat at so much a quarter, gold at so much an ounce, and the Bank of England discounting good bills at so much per cent! He might be asked, he observed in a peroration of great power, what were his principles? His principles were what they always had been. His principles were written in the countenances of the lion and unicorn; were stamped indelibly upon the royal shield which those grand animals supported, and upon the free words of fire which that shield bore. His principles were, Britannia and her sea-king trident! His principles were, commercial prosperity co-existently with perfect and profound agricultural contentment; but short of this he would never stop. His principles were, these,—with the addition of his colours nailed to the mast, every man's heart in the right place, every man's eye open, every man's hand ready, every man's mind on the alert. His principles were these, concurrently with a general revision of something—speak-

ing generally—and a possible readjustment of something else, not to be mentioned more particularly. His principles, to sum up all in a word were, Hearths and Altars, Labour and Capital, Crown and Sceptre, Elephant and Castle. And now, if his good friend Tipkisson required any further explanation from him he (our honourable friend) was there, willing and ready to give it.

Tipkisson, who all this time had stood conspicuous in the crowd, with his arms folded and his eyes intently fastened on our honourable friend: Tipkisson, who throughout our honourable friend's address had not relaxed a muscle of his visage, but had stood there, wholly unaffected by the torrent of eloquence: an object of contempt and scorn to mankind (by which we mean, of course, to the supporters of our honourable friend); Tipkisson now said that he was a plain man (Cries of "You are indeed!"), and that what he wanted to know was, what our honourable friend and the dozen noblemen and gentlemen were driving at?

Our honourable friend immediately replied, "At the illimitable perspective."

It was considered by the whole assembly that this happy statement of our honourable friend's political views ought, immediately, to have settled Tipkisson's business and covered him with confusion; but, that implacable person, regardless of the execrations that were heaped upon him from all sides (by which we mean, of course, from our honourable friend's side), persisted in retaining an unmoved countenance, and obstinately retorted that if our honourable friend meant that, he wished to know what *that* meant?

It was in repelling this most objectionable and indecent opposition, that our honourable friend displayed his highest qualifications for the representation of Verbosity. His warmest supporters present, and those who were best acquainted with his generalship, supposed that the moment was come when he would fall back upon the sacred bulwarks of our nationality. No such thing. He replied thus: "My good friend Tipkisson, gentlemen, wishes to know what I mean when he asks me what we are driving at, and when I candidly tell him, at the illimitable perspective, he wishes (if I understand him) to know what I mean!" "I do!" says Tipkisson, amid cries of "Shame" and "Down with him." "Gentlemen," says our honourable

friend, "I will indulge my good friend Tipkisson, by telling him, both what I mean and what I don't mean. (Cheers and cries of "Give it him!") Be it known to him then, and to all whom it may concern, that I do mean altars, hearths, and homes, and that I don't mean mosques and Mohammedanism!" The effect of this home-thrust was terrific. Tipkisson (who is a Baptist) was hooted down and hustled out, and has ever since been regarded as a Turkish Renegade who contemplates an early pilgrimage to Mecca. Nor was he the only discomfited man. The charge, while it stuck to him, was magically transferred to our honourable friend's opponent, who was represented in an immense variety of placards as a firm believer in Mahomet; and the men of Verbosity were asked to choose between our honourable friend and the Bible, and our honourable friend's opponent and the Koran. They decided for our honourable friend, and rallied round the illimitable perspective

It has been claimed for our honourable friend, with much appearance of reason, that he was the first to bend sacred matters to electioneering tactics. However this may be, the fine precedent was undoubtedly set in a Verbosity election: and it is certain that our honourable friend (who was a disciple of Brahma in his youth, and was a Buddhist when we had the honour of travelling with him a few years ago), always professes in public more anxiety than the whole Bench of Bishops, regarding the theological and doxological opinions of every man, woman, and child, in the United Kingdom.

As we began by saying that our honourable friend has got in again at this last election, and that we are delighted to find that he has got in, so we will conclude. Our honourable friend cannot come in for Verbosity too often. It is a good sign; it is a great example. It is to men like our honourable friend, and to contests like those from which he comes triumphant, that we are mainly indebted for that ready interest in politics, that fresh enthusiasm in the discharge of the duties of citizenship, that ardent desire to rush to the poll, at present so manifest throughout England. When the contest lies (as it sometimes does) between two such men as our honourable friend, it stimulates the finest emotions of our nature, and awakens the highest admiration of which our heads and hearts are capable.

It is not too much to predict that our honourable friend will be always at his post in the ensuing session. Whatever the question be, or whatever the form of its discussion; address to the crown, election petition, expenditure of the public money, extension of the public suffrage, education, crime; in the whole house, in committee of the whole house, in select committee; in every parliamentary discussion of every subject, everywhere: the Honourable Member for Verbosity will most certainly be found.

OUR VESTRY.

We have the glorious privilege of being always in hot water if we like. We are a shareholder in a Great Parochial British Joint Stock Bank of Balderdash. We have a Vestry in our borough, and can vote for a vestryman—might even *be* a vestryman, mayhap, if we were inspired by a lofty and noble ambition. Which we are not.

Our Vestry is a deliberative assembly of the utmost dignity and importance. Like the Senate of ancient Rome, its awful gravity overpowers (or ought to overpower) barbarian visitors. It sits in the Capitol (we mean in the capital building erected for it), chiefly on Saturdays, and shakes the earth to its centre with the echoes of its thundering eloquence, in a Sunday paper.

To get into this Vestry in the eminent capacity of Vestryman, gigantic efforts are made, and Herculean exertions used. It is made manifest to the dullest capacity at every election that if we reject Snozzle we are done for, and that if we fail to bring in Blunderbooze at the top of the poll, we are unworthy of the dearest rights of Britons. Flaming placards are rife on all the dead walls in the borough, public-houses hang out banners, hackney-cabs burst into full-grown flowers of type, and everybody is, or should be, in a paroxysm of anxiety.

At these momentous crises of the national fate, we are much assisted in our deliberations by two eminent volunteers; one of whom subscribes himself A Fellow Parishioner, the other, A Rate-Payer. Who they are, or what they are, or where they are, nobody knows; but, whatever

one asserts, the other contradicts. They are both voluminous writers, inditing more epistles than Lord Chesterfield in a single week; and the greater part of their feelings are too big for utterance in anything less than capital letters. They require the additional aid of whole rows of notes of admiration, like balloons, to point their generous indignation; and they sometimes communicate a crushing severity to stars. As thus:

MEN OF MOONEYMOUNT.

Is it, or is it not, a * * * to saddle the parish with a debt of £2,745 6*s.* 9*d.*, yet claim to be a RIGID ECONOMIST?

Is it, or is it not, a * * * to state as a fact what is proved to be *both a moral and a* PHYSICAL IMPOSSIBILITY?

Is it, or is it not, a * * * to call £2,745 6*s.* 9*d.* nothing; and nothing, something?

Do you, or do you *not* want a * * * TO REPRESENT YOU IN THE VESTRY?

Your consideration of these questions is recommended to you by

A FELLOW PARISHIONER.

It was to this important public document that one of our first orators, MR. MAGG (of Little Winkling Street), adverted, when he opened the great debate of the fourteenth of November by saying, "Sir, I hold in my hand an anonymous slander"—and when the interruption, with which he was at that point assailed by the opposite faction, gave rise to that memorable discussion on a point of order which will ever be remembered with interest by constitutional assemblies. In the animated debate to which we refer, no fewer than thirty-seven gentlemen, many of them of great eminence, including MR. WIGSBY (of Chumbledon Square), were seen upon their legs at one time; and it was on the same great occasion that DOGGINSON—regarded in our Vestry as "a regular John Bull:" we believe, in consequence of his having always made up his mind on every subject without knowing anything about it—informed another gentleman of similar principles on the opposite side, that if he "cheek'd him," he would resort to the extreme measure of knocking his blessed head off.

This was a great occasion. But, our Vestry shines habitually. In asserting its own pre-eminence, for instance, it is very strong. On the least provocation, or on none, it will be clamorous to know whether it is to be "dictated to," or "trampled on," or "ridden over rough-shod." Its great watchword is Self-government. That is to say, supposing our Vestry to favour any little harmless disorder like Typhus Fever, and supposing the Government of the country to be, by any accident, in such ridiculous hands, as that any of its authorities should consider it a duty to object to Typhus Fever—obviously an unconstitutional objection—then, our Vestry cuts in with a terrible manifesto about Self-government, and claims its independent right to have as much Typhus Fever as pleases itself. Some absurd and dangerous persons have represented, on the other hand, that though our Vestry may be able to "beat the bounds" of its own parish, it may not be able to beat the bounds of its own diseases; which (say they) spread over the whole land, in an ever-expanding circle of waste, and misery, and death, and widowhood, and orphanage, and desolation. But, our Vestry makes short work of any such fellows as these.

It was our Vestry—pink of Vestries as it is—that in support of its favourite principle took the celebrated ground of denying the existence of the last pestilence that raged in England, when the pestilence was raging at the Vestry doors. Dogginson said it was plums; Mr. Wigsby (of Chumbledon Square) said it was oysters; Mr. Magg (of Little Winkling Street) said, amid great cheering, it was the newspapers. The noble indignation of our Vestry with that un-English institution the Board of Health, under those circumstances, yields one of the finest passages in its history. It wouldn't hear of rescue. Like Mr. Joseph Miller's Frenchman, it would be drowned and nobody should save it. Transported beyond grammar by its kindled ire, it spoke in unknown tongues, and vented unintelligible bellowings, more like an ancient oracle than the modern oracle it is admitted on all hands to be. Rare exigencies produce rare things; and even our Vestry, new hatched to the woful time, came forth a greater goose than ever.

But this, again, was a special occasion. Our Vestry, at more ordinary periods, demands its meed of praise.

Our Vestry is eminently parliamentary. Playing at Par-

liament is its favourite game. It is even regarded by some of its members as a chapel of ease to the House of Commons: a Little Go to be passed first. It has its strangers' gallery, and its reported debates (see the Sunday paper before mentioned), and our Vestrymen are in and out of order, and on and off their legs, and above all are transcendantly quarrelsome, after the pattern of the real original.

Our Vestry being assembled, Mr. Magg never begs to trouble Mr. Wigsby with a simple inquiry. He knows better than that. Seeing the honourable gentleman, associated in their minds with Chumbledon Square, in his place, he wishes to ask that honourable gentleman what the intentions of himself, and those with whom he acts, may be, on the subject of the paving of the district known as Piggleum Buildings? Mr. Wigsby replies (with his eye on next Sunday's paper) that in reference to the question which has been put to him by the honourable gentleman opposite, he must take leave to say, that if that honourable gentleman had had the courtesy to give him notice of that question, he (Mr. Wigsby) would have consulted with his colleagues in reference to the advisibility, in the present state of the discussions on the new paving-rate, of answering that question. But, as the honourable gentleman has NOT had the courtesy to give him notice of that question (great cheering from the Wigsby interest), he must decline to give the honourable gentleman the satisfaction he requires. Mr. Magg, instantly rising to retort, is received with loud cries of "Spoke!" from the Wigsby interest, and with cheers from the Magg side of the house. Moreover, five gentlemen rise to order, and one of them, in revenge for being taken no notice of, petrifies the assembly by moving that this Vestry do now adjourn; but, is persuaded to withdraw that awful proposal, in consideration of its tremendous consequences if persevered in. Mr. Magg, for the purpose of being heard, then begs to move, that you, sir, do now pass to the order of the day; and takes that opportunity of saying, that if an honourable gentleman whom he has in his eye, and will not demean himself by more particularly naming (oh, oh, and cheers), supposes that he is to be put down by clamour, that honourable gentleman—however supported he may be, through thick and thin, by a Fellow Parishioner, with whom he is well acquainted (cheers and counter-cheers, Mr. Magg being in-

variably backed by the Rate-Payer)—will find himself mistaken. Upon this, twenty members of our Vestry speak in succession concerning what the two great men have meant, until it appears, after an hour and twenty minutes, that neither of them meant anything. Then our Vestry begins business.

We have said that, after the pattern of the real original, our Vestry in playing at Parliament is transcendantly quarrelsome. It enjoys a personal altercation above all things. Perhaps the most redoubtable case of this kind we have ever had—though we have had so many that it is difficult to decide—was that on which the last extreme solemnities passed between Mr. Tiddypot (of Gumption House) and Captain Banger (of Wilderness Walk).

In an adjourned debate on the question whether water could be regarded in the light of a necessary of life; respecting which there were great differences of opinion, and many shades of sentiment; Mr. Tiddypot, in a powerful burst of eloquence against that hypothesis, frequently made use of the expression that such and such a rumour had "reached his ears." Captain Banger, following him, and holding that, for purposes of ablution and refreshment, a pint of water per diem was necessary for every adult of the lower classes, and half a pint for every child, cast ridicule upon his address in a sparkling speech, and concluded by saying that instead of those rumours having reached the ears of the honourable gentleman, he rather thought the honourable gentleman's ears must have reached the rumours, in consequence of their well-known length. Mr. Tiddypot immediately rose, looked the honourable and gallant gentleman full in the face, and left the Vestry.

The excitement, at this moment painfully intense, was heightened to an acute degree when Captain Banger rose, and also left the Vestry. After a few moments of profound silence—one of those breathless pauses never to be forgotten—Mr. Chib (of Tucket's Terrace, and the father of the Vestry) rose. He said that words and looks had passed in that assembly, replete with consequences which every feeling mind must deplore. Time pressed. The sword was drawn, and while he spoke the scabbard might be thrown away. He moved that those honourable gentlemen who had left the Vestry be recalled, and required to pledge themselves upon their honour that this affair should

go no farther. The motion being by a general union of parties unanimously agreed to (for everybody wanted to have the belligerents there, instead of out of sight: which was no fun at all), Mr. Magg was deputed to recover Captain Banger, and Mr. Chib himself to go in search of Mr. Tiddypot. The Captain was found in a conspicuous position, surveying the passing omnibuses from the top step of the front-door immediately adjoining the beadle's box; Mr. Tiddypot made a desperate attempt at resistance, but was overpowered by Mr. Chib (a remarkably hale old gentleman of eighty-two), and brought back in safety.

Mr. Tiddypot and the Captain being restored to their places, and glaring on each other, were called upon by the chair to abandon all homicidal intentions, and give the Vestry an assurance that they did so. Mr. Tiddypot remained profoundly silent. The Captain likewise remained profoundly silent, saving that he was observed by those around him to fold his arms like Napoleon Buonaparte, and to snort in his breathing—actions but too expressive of gunpowder.

The most intense emotion now prevailed. Several members clustered in remonstrance round the Captain, and several round Mr. Tiddypot; but, both were obdurate. Mr. Chib then presented himself amid tremendous cheering, and said, that not to shrink from the discharge of his painful duty, he must now move that both honourable gentlemen be taken into custody by the beadle, and conveyed to the nearest police-office, there to be held to bail. The union of parties still continuing, the motion was seconded by Mr. Wigsby—on all usual occasions Mr. Chib's opponent—and rapturously carried with only one dissentient voice. This was Digginson's, who said from his place "Let 'em fight it out with fistes;" but whose coarse remark was received as it merited.

The beadle now advanced along the floor of the Vestry, and beckoned with his cocked hat to both members. Every breath was suspended. To say that a pin might have been heard to fall, would be feebly to express the all-absorbing interest and silence. Suddenly, enthusiastic cheering broke out from every side of the Vestry. Captain Banger had risen—being, in fact, pulled up by a friend on either side, and poked up by a friend behind.

The Captain said, in a deep determined voice, that he had every respect for that Vestry and every respect for that chair; that he also respected the honourable gentleman of Gumption House; but, that he respected his honour more. Hereupon the Captain sat down, leaving the whole Vestry much affected. Mr. Tiddypot instantly rose, and was received with the same encouragement. He likewise said—and the exquisite art of this orator communicated to the observation an air of freshness and novelty—that he too had every respect for that Vestry; that he too had every respect for that chair. That he too respected the honourable and gallant gentleman of Wilderness Walk; but, that he too respected his honour more. "Hows'ever," added the distinguished Vestryman, "if the honourable or gallant gentleman's honour is never more doubted and damaged than it is by me, he's all right." Captain Banger immediately started up again, and said that after those observations, involving as they did ample concession to his honour without compromising the honour of the honourable gentleman, he would be wanting in honour as well as in generosity, if he did not at once repudiate all intention of wounding the honour of the honourable gentleman, or saying anything dishonourable to his honourable feelings. These observations were repeatedly interrupted by bursts of cheers. Mr. Tiddypot retorted that he well knew the spirit of honour by which the honourable and gallant gentleman was so honourably animated, and that he accepted an honourable explanation, offered in a way that did him honour; but, he trusted that the Vestry would consider that his (Mr. Tiddypot's) honour had imperatively demanded of him that painful course which he had felt it due to his honour to adopt. The Captain and Mr. Tiddypot then touched their hats to one another across the Vestry, a great many times, and it is thought that these proceedings (reported to the extent of several columns in next Sunday's paper) will bring them in as churchwardens next year.

All this was strictly after the pattern of the real original, and so are the whole of our Vestry's proceedings. In all their debates, they are laudably imitative of the windy and wordy slang of the real original, and of nothing that is better in it. They have headstrong party animosities, without any reference to the merits of questions; they tack a surprising amount of debate to a very little business;

they set more store by forms than they do by substances: —all very like the real original! It has been doubted in our borough, whether our Vestry is of any utility; but our own conclusion is, that it is of the use to the Borough that a diminishing mirror is to a painter, as enabling it to perceive in a small focus of absurdity all the surface defects of the real original.

OUR BORE.

It is unnecessary to say that we keep a bore. Everybody does. But, the bore whom we have the pleasure and honour of enumerating among our particular friends, is such a generic bore, and has so many traits (as it appears to us) in common with the great bore family, that we are tempted to make him the subject of the present notes. May he be generally accepted!

Our bore is admitted on all hands to be a good-hearted man. He may put fifty people out of temper, but he keeps his own. He preserves a sickly stolid smile upon his face, when other faces are ruffled by the perfection he has attained in his art, and has an equable voice which never travels out of one key or rises above one pitch. His manner is a manner of tranquil interest. None of his opinions are startling. Among his deepest-rooted convictions, it may be mentioned that he considers the air of England damp, and holds that our lively neighbours—he always calls the French our lively neighbours—have the advantage of us in that particular. Nevertheless he is unable to forget that John Bull is John Bull all the world over, and that England with all her faults is England still.

Our bore has travelled. He could not possibly be a complete bore without having travelled. He rarely speaks of his travels without introducing, sometimes on his own plan of construction, morsels of the language of the country—which he always translates. You cannot name to him any little remote town in France, Italy, Germany, or Switzerland but he knows it well; stayed there a fortnight under peculiar circumstances. And talking of that little place, perhaps you know a statue over an old fountain, up a little court, which is the second—no, the third—stay—yes, the

third turning on the right, after you come out of the Post house, going up the hill towards the market? You *don't* know that statue? Nor that fountain? You surprise him! They are not usually seen by travellers (most extraordinary, he has never yet met with a single traveller who knew them, except one German, the most intelligent man he ever met in his life!) but he thought that YOU would have been the man to find them out. And then he describes them, in a circumstantial lecture half-an-hour long, generally delivered behind a door which is constantly being opened from the other side; and implores you, if you ever revisit that place, now do go and look at that statue and fountain!

Our bore, in a similar manner, being in Italy, made a discovery of a dreadful picture, which has been the terror of a large portion of the civilised world ever since. We have seen the liveliest men paralysed by it, across a broad dining-table. He was lounging among the mountains, sir, basking in the mellow influences of the climate, when he came to *una piccola chiesa*—a little church—or perhaps it would be more correct to say *una piccolissima cappella*—the smallest chapel you can possibly imagine—and walked in. There was nobody inside but a *cieco*—a blind man—saying his prayers, and a *vecchio padre*—old friar—rattling a money box. But, above the head of that friar, and immediately to the right of the altar as you enter—or say near the centre—there hung a painting (subject, Virgin and Child) so divine in its expression, so pure and yet so warm and rich in its tone, so fresh in its touch, at once so glowing in its colour and so statuesque in its repose, that our bore cried out in an ecstasy, "That's the finest picture in Italy!" And so it is, sir. There is no doubt of it. It is astonishing that that picture is so little known. Even the painter is uncertain. He afterwards took Blumb, of the Royal Academy (it is to be observed that our bore takes none but eminent people to see sights, and that none but eminent people take our bore), and you never saw a man so affected in your life as Blumb was. He cried like a child! And then our bore begins his description in detail—for all this is introductory—and strangles his hearers with the folds of the purple drapery.

By an equally fortunate conjunction of accidental circumstances, it happened that when our bore was in Switzerland,

he discovered a Valley, of that superb character, that Chamouni is not to be mentioned in the same breath with it. This is how it was, sir. He was travelling on a mule—had been in the saddle some days—when, as he and the guide, Pierre Blanquo: whom you may know, perhaps?—our bore is sorry you don't, because he's the only guide deserving of the name—as he and Pierre were descending, towards evening, among those everlasting snows, to the little village of La Croix, our bore observed a mountain track turning off sharply to the right. At first he was uncertain whether it *was* a track at all, and in fact, he said to Pierre, "*Qu'est que c'est donc, mon ami?*—What is that, my friend?" "*Où, monsieur?*" said Pierre,—"Where, sir?" "*Là!*—there!" said our bore. "*Monsieur, ce n'est rien de tout*—sir, it's nothing at all," said Pierre. "*Allons!*—Make haste. *Il va neiger*—it's going to snow!" But, our bore was not to be done in that way, and he firmly replied, "I wish to go in that direction—*je veux y aller*. I am bent upon it—*je suis déterminé*. *En avant!*—go ahead!" In consequence of which firmness on our bore's part, they proceeded, sir, during two hours of evening, and three of moonlight (they waited in a cavern till the moon was up), along the slenderest track, overhanging perpendicularly the most awful gulfs, until they arrived, by a winding descent, in a valley that possibly, and he may say probably, was never visited by any stranger before. What a valley! Mountains piled on mountains, avalanches stemmed by pine forests; waterfalls, chalets, mountain-torrents, wooden bridges, every conceivable picture of Swiss scenery! The whole village turned out to receive our bore. The peasant girls kissed him, the men shook hands with him, one old lady of benevolent appearance wept upon his breast. He was conducted, in a primitive triumph, to the little inn: where he was taken ill next morning, and lay for six weeks, attended by the amiable hostess (the same benevolent old lady who had wept over night) and her charming daughter, Fanchette. It is nothing to say that they were attentive to him; they doted on him. They called him in their simple way, *l'Ange Anglais*—the English Angel. When our bore left the valley, there was not a dry eye in the place; some of the people attended him for miles. He begs and entreats of you as a personal favour, that if you ever go to Switzerland

again (you have mentioned that your last visit was your twenty-third), you will go to that valley, and see Swiss scenery for the first time. And if you want really to know the pastoral people of Switzerland, and to understand them, mention, in that valley, our bore's name!

Our bore has a crushing brother in the East, who, somehow or other, was admitted to smoke pipes with Mehemet Ali, and instantly became an authority on the whole range of Eastern matters, from Haroun Alraschid to the present Sultan. He is in the habit of expressing mysterious opinions on this wide range of subjects, but on questions of foreign policy more particularly, to our bore, in letters; and our bore is continually sending bits of these letters to the newspapers (which they never insert), and carrying other bits about in his pocket-book. It is even whispered that he has been seen at the Foreign Office, receiving great consideration from the messengers, and having his card promptly borne into the sanctuary of the temple. The havoc committed in society by this Eastern brother is beyond belief. Our bore is always ready with him. We have known our bore to fall upon an intelligent young sojourner in the wilderness, in the first sentence of a narrative, and beat all confidence out of him with one blow of his brother. He became omniscient, as to foreign policy, in the smoking of those pipes with Mehemet Ali The balance of power in Europe, the machinations of the Jesuits, the gentle and humanising influence of Austria, the position and prospects of that hero of the noble soul who is worshipped by happy France, are all easy reading to our bore's brother. And our bore is so provokingly self-denying about him! "I don't pretend to more than a very general knowledge of these subjects myself," says he, after enervating the intellects of several strong men, "but these are my brother's opinions, and I believe he is known to be well-informed."

The commonest incidents and places would appear to have been made special, expressly for our bore. Ask him whether he ever chanced to walk, between seven and eight in the morning, down St. James's Street, London, and he will tell you, never in his life but once. But, it's curious that that once was in eighteen thirty; and that as our bore was walking down the street you have just mentioned, at the hour you have just mentioned—half-past seven or twenty minutes to eight. No! Let him be correct!—ex-

actly a quarter before eight by the palace clock—he met a fresh-coloured, grey-haired, good-humoured looking gentleman, with a brown umbrella, who, as he passed him, touched his hat and said, "Fine morning, sir, fine morning!"—William the Fourth!

Ask our bore whether he has seen Mr. Barry's new Houses of Parliament, and he will reply that he has not yet inspected them minutely, but, that you remind him that it was his singular fortune to be the last man to see the old Houses of Parliament before the fire broke out. It happened in this way. Poor John Spine, the celebrated novelist, had taken him over to South Lambeth to read to him the last few chapters of what was certainly his best book—as our bore told him at the time, adding, "Now, my dear John, touch it, and you'll spoil it!"—and our bore was going back to the club by way of Millbank and Parliament Street, when he stopped to think of Canning, and look at the Houses of Parliament. Now, you know far more of the philosophy of Mind than our bore does, and are much better able to explain to him than he is to explain to you why or wherefore, at that particular time, the thought of fire should come into his head. But, it did. It did. He thought, What a national calamity if an edifice connected with so many associations should be consumed by fire! At that time there was not a single soul in the street but himself. All was quiet, dark, and solitary. After contemplating the building for a minute—or, say a minute and a half, not more—our bore proceeded on his way, mechanically repeating, What a national calamity if such an edifice, connected with such associations, should be destroyed by—— A man coming towards him in a violent state of agitation completed the sentence, with the exclamation, Fire! Our bore looked round, and the whole structure was in a blaze.

In harmony and union with these experiences, our bore never went anywhere in a steam-boat but he made either the best or the worst voyage ever known on that station. Either he overheard the captain say to himself, with his hands clasped, "We are all lost!" or the captain openly declared to him that he had never made such a run before, and never should be able to do it again. Our bore was in that express train on that railway, when they made (unknown to the passengers) the experiment of going at the

rate of a hundred miles an hour. Our bore remarked on that occasion to the other people in the carriage, "This is too fast, but sit still!" He was at the Norwich musical festival when the extraordinary echo for which science has been wholly unable to account, was heard for the first and last time. He and the bishop heard it at the same moment, and caught each other's eye. He was present at that illumination of St. Peter's, of which the Pope is known to have remarked, as he looked at it out of his window in the Vatican, "*O Cielo! Questa cosa non sara fatta, mai ancora, come questa*—O Heaven! this thing will never be done again, like this!" He has seen every lion he ever saw, under some remarkably propitious circumstances. He knows there is no fancy in it, because in every case the showman mentioned the fact at the time, and congratulated him upon it.

At one period of his life, our bore had an illness. It was an illness of a dangerous character for society at large. Innocently remark that you are very well, or that somebody else is very well; and our bore, with a preface that one never knows what a blessing health is until one has lost it, is reminded of that illness, and drags you through the whole of its symptoms, progress, and treatment. Innocently remark that you are not well, or that somebody else is not well, and the same inevitable result ensues. You will learn how our bore felt a tightness about here, sir, for which he couldn't account, accompanied with a constant sensation as if he were being stabbed—or, rather, jobbed—that expresses it more correctly—jobbed with a blunt knife. Well, sir! This went on, until sparks began to flit before his eyes, water-wheels to turn round in his head, and hammers to beat incessantly thump, thump, thump, all down his back—along the whole of the spinal vertebræ. Our bore, when his sensations had come to this, thought it a duty he owed to himself to take advice, and he said, Now, whom shall I consult? He naturally thought of Callow, at that time one of the most eminent physicians in London, and he went to Callow. Callow said, "Liver!" and prescribed rhubarb and calomel, low diet, and moderate exercise. Our bore went on with this treatment, getting worse every day, until he lost confidence in Callow, and went to Moon, whom half the town was then mad about. Moon was interested in the case; to do him justice he was very

much interested in the case; and he said "Kidneys!" He altered the whole treatment, sir—gave strong acids, cupped, and blistered. This went on, our bore still getting worse every day, until he openly told Moon it would be a satisfaction to him if he would have a consultation with Clatter. The moment Clatter saw our bore, he said, "Accumulation of fat about the heart!" Snugglewood, who was called in with him, differed, and said, "Brain!" But, what they all agreed upon was, to lay our bore upon his back, to shave his head, to leech him, to administer enormous quantities of medicine, and to keep him low; so that he was reduced to a mere shadow, you wouldn't have known him, and nobody considered it possible that he could ever recover. This was his condition, sir, when he heard of Jilkins—at that period in a very small practice, and living in the upper part of a house in Great Portland Street; but still, you understand, with a rising reputation among the few people to whom he was known. Being in that condition in which a drowning man catches at a straw, our bore sent for Jilkins. Jilkins came. Our bore liked his eye, and said, "Mr. Jilkins, I have a presentiment that you will do me good." Jilkins's reply was characteristic of the man. It was, "Sir, I mean to do you good." This confirmed our bore's opinion of his eye, and they went into the case together—went completely into it. Jilkins then got up, walked across the room, came back, and sat down. His words were these. "You have been humbugged. This is a case of indigestion, occasioned by deficiency of power in the Stomach. Take a mutton chop in half-an-hour, with a glass of the finest old sherry that can be got for money. Take two mutton chops to-morrow, and two glasses of the finest old sherry. Next day, I'll come again." In a week our bore was on his legs, and Jilkins's success dates from that period!

Our bore is great in secret information. He happens to know many things that nobody else knows. He can generally tell you where the split is in the Ministry; he knows a deal about the Queen; and has little anecdotes to relate of the royal nursery. He gives you the judge's private opinion of Sludge the murderer, and his thoughts when he tried him. He happens to know what such a man got by such a transaction, and it was fifteen thousand five hundred pounds, and his income is twelve thousand a year. Our

bore is also great in mystery. He believes, with an exasperating appearance of profound meaning, that you saw Parkins last Sunday?—Yes, you did.—Did he say anything particular?—No, nothing particular.—Our bore is surprised at that.—Why?—Nothing. Only he understood that Parkins had come to tell you something.—What about?—Well! our bore is not at liberty to mention what about. But, he believes you will hear that from Parkins himself, soon, and he hopes it may not surprise you as it did him. Perhaps, however, you never heard about Parkins's wife's sister?—No.—Ah! says our bore, that explains it!

Our bore is also great in argument. He infinitely enjoys a long humdrum, drowsy interchange of words of dispute about nothing. He considers that it strengthens the mind, consequently, he "don't see that," very often. Or, he would be glad to know what you mean by that. Or, he doubts that. Or, he has always understood exactly the reverse of that. Or, he can't admit that. Or, he begs to deny that. Or, surely you don't mean that. And so on. He once advised us; offered us a piece of advice, after the fact, totally impracticable and wholly impossible of acceptance, because it supposed the fact, then eternally disposed of, to be yet in abeyance. It was a dozen years ago, and to this hour our bore benevolently wishes, in a mild voice, on certain regular occasions, that we had thought better of his opinion.

The instinct with which our bore finds out another bore, and closes with him, is amazing. We have seen him pick his man out of fifty men, in a couple of minutes. They love to go (which they do naturally) into a slow argument on a previously exhausted subject, and to contradict each other, and to wear the hearers out, without impairing their own perennial freshness as bores. It improves the good understanding between them, and they get together afterwards, and bore each other amicably. Whenever we see our bore behind a door with another bore, we know that when he comes forth, he will praise the other bore as one of the most intelligent men he ever met. And this bringing us to the close of what we had to say about our bore, we are anxious to have it understood that he never bestowed this praise on us.

LYING AWAKE.

"My uncle lay with his eyes half closed, and his nightcap drawn almost down to his nose. His fancy was already wandering, and began to mingle up the present scene with the crater of Vesuvius, the French Opera, the Coliseum at Rome, Dolly's Chop-house in London, and all the farrago of noted places with which the brain of a traveller is crammed; in a word, he was just falling asleep."

Thus, that delightful writer, WASHINGTON IRVING, in his Tales of a Traveller. But, it happened to me the other night to be lying: not with my eyes half closed, but with my eyes wide open; not with my nightcap drawn almost down to my nose, for on sanitary principles I never wear a nightcap: but with my hair pitch-forked and tousled all over the pillow; not just falling asleep by any means, but glaringly, persistently, and obstinately, broad awake. Perhaps, with no scientific intention or invention, I was illustrating the theory of the Duality of the Brain; perhaps one part of my brain, being wakeful, sat up to watch the other part which was sleepy. Be that as it may, something in me was as desirous to go to sleep as it possibly could be, but something else in me *would not* go to sleep, and was as obstinate as George the Third.

Thinking of George the Third—for I devote this paper to my train of thoughts as I lay awake: most people lying awake sometimes, and having some interest in the subject —put me in mind of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, and so Benjamin Franklin's paper on the art of procuring pleasant dreams, which would seem necessarily to include the art of going to sleep, came into my head. Now, as I often used to read that paper when I was a very small boy, and as I recollect everything I read then, as perfectly as I forget everything I read now, I quoted "Get out of bed, beat up and turn your pillow, shake the bed-clothes well with at least twenty-shakes, then throw the bed open and leave it to cool; in the meanwhile, continuing undrest, walk about your chamber. When you begin to feel the cold air unpleasant, then return to your bed, and you will soon fall asleep, and your sleep will be sweet and pleasant." Not a

bit of it! I performed the whole ceremony, and if it were possible for me to be more saucer-eyed than I was before, that was the only result that came of it.

Except Niagara. The two quotations from Washington Irving and Benjamin Franklin may have put it in my head by an American association of ideas; but there I was, and the Horse-shoe Fall was thundering and tumbling in my eyes and ears, and the very rainbows that I left upon the spray when I really did last look upon it, were beautiful to see. The night-light being quite as plain, however, and sleep seeming to be many thousand miles further off than Niagara, I made up my mind to think a little about Sleep; which I no sooner did than I whirled off in spite of myself to Drury Lane Theatre, and there saw a great actor and dear friend of mine (whom I had been thinking of in the day) playing Macbeth, and heard him apostrophising "the death of each day's life," as I have heard him many a time, in the days that are gone.

But, Sleep. I *will* think about Sleep. I am determined to think (this is the way I went on) about Sleep. I must hold the word Sleep, tight and fast, or I shall be off at a tangent in half a second. I feel myself unaccountably straying, already, into Clare Market. Sleep. It would be curious, as illustrating the equality of sleep, to inquire how many of its phenomena are common to all classes, to all degrees of wealth and poverty, to every grade of education and ignorance. Here, for example, is her Majesty Queen Victoria in her palace, this present blessed night, and here is Winking Charley, a sturdy vagrant, in one of her Majesty's jails. Her Majesty has fallen, many thousands of times, from that same Tower, which *I* claim a right to tumble off now and then. So has Winking Charley. Her Majesty in her sleep has opened or prorogued Parliament, or has held a Drawing Room, attired in some very scanty dress, the deficiencies and improprieties of which have caused her great uneasiness. I, in my degree, have suffered unspeakable agitation of mind from taking the chair at a public dinner at the London Tavern in my night-clothes, which not all the courtesy of my kind friend and host Mr. Bathe could persuade me were quite adapted to the occasion. Winking Charley has been repeatedly tried in a worse condition. Her Majesty is no stranger to a vault or firmament, of a sort of floorcloth, with an indis-

tinct pattern distantly resembling eyes, which occasionally obtrudes itself on her repose. Neither am I. Neither is Winking Charley. It is quite common to all three of us to skim along with airy strides a little above the ground; also to hold, with the deepest interest, dialogues with various people, all represented by ourselves; and to be at our wit's end to know what they are going to tell us; and to be indescribably astonished by the secrets they disclose. It is probable that we have all three committed murders and hidden bodies. It is pretty certain that we have all desperately wanted to cry out, and have had no voice; that we have all gone to the play and not been able to get in; that we have all dreamed much more of our youth than of our later lives; that—I have lost it! The thread's broken.

And up I go. I, lying here with the night-light before me, up I go, for no reason on earth that I can find out, and drawn by no links that are visible to me, up the Great Saint Bernard! I have lived in Switzerland, and rambled among the mountains; but, why I should go there now, and why up the Great Saint Bernard in preference to any other mountain, I have no idea. As I lie here broad awake, and with every sense so sharpened that I can distinctly hear distant noises inaudible to me at another time, I make that journey, as I really did, on the same summer day, with the same happy party—ah! two since dead, I grieve to think—and there is the same track, with the same black wooden arms to point the way, and there are the same storm-refuges here and there; and there is the same snow falling at the top, and there are the same frosty mists, and there is the same intensely cold convent with its ménagerie smell, and the same breed of dogs fast dying out, and the same breed of jolly young monks whom I mourn to know as humbugs, and the same convent parlour with its piano and the sitting round the fire, and the same supper, and the same lone night in a cell, and the same bright fresh morning when going out into the highly rarefied air was like a plunge into an icy bath. Now, see here what comes along; and why does this thing stalk into my mind on the top of a Swiss mountain!

It is a figure that I once saw, just after dark, chalked upon a door in a little back lane near a country church—my first church. How young a child I may have been at the time I don't know, but it horrified me so intensely—in

connection with the churchyard, I suppose, for it smokes a pipe, and has a big hat with each of its ears sticking out in a horizontal line under the brim, and is not in itself more oppressive than a mouth from ear to ear, a pair of goggle eyes, and hands like two bunches of carrots, five in each, can make it—that it is still vaguely alarming to me to recall (as I have often done before, lying awake) the running home, the looking behind, the horror, of its following me; though whether disconnected from the door, or door and all, I can't say, and perhaps never could. It lays a disagreeable train. I must resolve to think of something on the voluntary principle.

The balloon ascents of this last season. They will do to think about, while I lie awake, as well as anything else. I must hold them tight though, for I feel them sliding away, and in their stead are the Mannings, husband and wife, hanging on the top of Horsemonger Lane Jail. In connection with which dismal spectacle, I recall this curious fantasy of the mind. That, having beheld that execution, and having left those two forms dangling on the top of the entrance gateway—the man's, a limp, loose suit of clothes as if the man had gone out of them; the woman's, a fine shape, so elaborately corseted and artfully dressed, that it was quite unchanged in its trim appearance as it slowly swung from side to side—I never could, by my uttermost efforts, for some weeks, present the outside of that prison to myself (which the terrible impression I had received continually obliged me to do) without presenting it with the two figures still hanging in the morning air. Until, strolling past the gloomy place one night, when the street was deserted and quiet, and actually seeing that the bodies were not there, my fancy was persuaded, as it were, to take them down and bury them within the precincts of the jail, where they have lain ever since.

The balloon ascents of last season. Let me reckon them up. There were the horse, the bull, the parachute, and the tumbler hanging on—chiefly by his toes, I believe—below the car. Very wrong, indeed, and decidedly to be stopped. But, in connection with these and similar dangerous exhibitions, it strikes me that that portion of the public whom they entertain, is unjustly reproached. Their pleasure is in the difficulty overcome. They are a public of great faith, and are quite confident that the gentleman

will not fall off the horse, or the lady off the bull or out of the parachute, and that the tumbler has a firm hold with his toes. They do not go to see the adventurer vanquished, but triumphant. There is no parallel in public combats between men and beasts, because nobody can answer for the particular beast—unless it were always the same beast, in which case it would be a mere stage-show, which the same public would go in the same state of mind to see, entirely believing in the brute being beforehand safely subdued by the man. That they are not accustomed to calculate hazards and dangers with any nicety, we may know from their rash exposure of themselves in overcrowded steamboats, and unsafe conveyances and places of all kinds. And I cannot help thinking that instead of railing, and attributing savage motives to a people naturally well disposed and humane, it is better to teach them, and lead them argumentatively and reasonably—for they are very reasonable, if you will discuss a matter with them—to more considerate and wise conclusions.

This is a disagreeable intrusion! Here is a man with his throat cut, dashing towards me as I lie awake! A recollection of an old story of a kinsman of mine, who, going home one foggy winter night to Hampstead, when London was much smaller and the road lonesome, suddenly encountered such a figure rushing past him, and presently two keepers from a madhouse in pursuit. A very unpleasant creature indeed, to come into my mind unbidden, as I lie awake.

—The balloon ascents of last season. I must return to the balloons. Why did the bleeding man start out of them? Never mind; if I inquire, he will be back again. The balloons. This particular public have inherently a great pleasure in the contemplation of physical difficulties overcome; mainly, as I take it, because the lives of a large majority of them are exceedingly monotonous and real, and further, are a struggle against continual difficulties, and further still, because anything in the form of accidental injury, or any kind of illness or disability is so very serious in their own sphere. I will explain this seeming paradox of mine. Take the case of a Christmas Pantomime. Surely nobody supposes that the young mother in the pit who falls into fits of laughter when the baby is boiled or sat upon, would be at all diverted by such an occurrence

off the stage. Nor is the decent workman in the gallery, who is transported beyond the ignorant present by the delight with which he sees a stout gentleman pushed out of a two pair of stairs window, to be slandered by the suspicion that he would be in the least entertained by such a spectacle in any street in London, Paris, or New York. It always appears to me that the secret of this enjoyment lies in the temporary superiority to the common hazards and mischances of life; in seeing casualties, attended when they really occur with bodily and mental suffering, tears, and poverty, happen through a very rough sort of poetry without the least harm being done to any one—the pretence of distress in a pantomime being so broadly humorous as to be no pretence at all. Much as in the comic fiction I can understand the mother with a very vulnerable baby at home, greatly relishing the invulnerable baby on the stage, so in the Cremorne reality I can understand the mason who is always liable to fall off a scaffold in his working jacket and to be carried to the hospital, having an infinite admiration of the radiant personage in spangles who goes into the clouds upon a bull, or upside down, and who, he takes it for granted—not reflecting upon the thing—has, by uncommon skill and dexterity, conquered such mischances as those to which he and his acquaintance are continually exposed.

I wish the Morgue in Paris would not come here as I lie awake, with its ghastly beds, and the swollen saturated clothes hanging up, and the water dripping, dripping all day long, upon that other swollen saturated something in the corner, like a heap of crushed over-ripe figs that I have seen in Italy! And this detestable Morgue comes back again at the head of a procession of forgotten ghost stories. This will never do. I must think of something else as I lie awake; or, like that sagacious animal in the United States who recognised the colonel who was such a dead shot, I am a gone 'Coon. What shall I think of? The late brutal assaults. Very good subject. The late brutal assaults.

(Though whether, supposing I should see, here before me as I lie awake, the awful phantom described in one of those ghost stories, who, with a head-dress of shroud, was always seen looking in through a certain glass door at a certain dead hour—whether, in such a case it would be the

least consolation to me to know on philosophical grounds that it was merely my imagination, is a question I can't help asking myself by the way.)

The late brutal assaults. I strongly question the expediency of advocating the revival of whipping for those crimes. It is a natural and generous impulse to be indignant at the perpetration of inconceivable brutality, but I doubt the whipping panacea gravely. Not in the least regard or pity for the criminal, whom I hold in far lower estimation than a mad wolf, but in consideration for the general tone and feeling, which is very much improved since the whipping times. It is bad for a people to be familiarised with such punishments. When the whip went out of Bridewell, and ceased to be flourished at the cart's tail and at the whipping-post, it began to fade out of madhouses, and workhouses, and schools and families, and to give place to a better system everywhere, than cruel driving. It would be hasty, because a few brutes may be inadequately punished, to revive, in any aspect, what, in so many aspects, society is hardly yet happily rid of. The whip is a very contagious kind of thing, and difficult to confine within one set of bounds. Utterly abolish punishment by fine—a barbarous device, quite as much out of date as wager by battle, but particularly connected in the vulgar mind with this class of offence—at least quadruple the term of imprisonment for aggravated assaults—and above all let us, in such cases, have no Pet Prisoning, vain glorifying, strong soup, and roasted meats, but hard work, and one unchanging and uncompromising dietary of bread and water, well or ill; and we shall do much better than by going down into the dark to grope for the whip among the rusty fragments of the rack, and the branding iron, and the chains and gibbet from the public roads, and the weights that pressed men to death in the cells of Newgate.

I had proceeded thus far, when I found I had been lying awake so long that the very dead began to wake too, and to crowd into my thoughts most sorrowfully. Therefore, I resolved to lie awake no more, but to get up and go out for a night walk—which resolution was an acceptable relief to me, as I dare say it may prove now to a great many more.

DOWN WITH THE TIDE.

A VERY dark night it was, and bitter cold; the east wind blowing bleak, and bringing with it stinging particles from marsh, and moor, and fen—from the Great Desert and Old Egypt, may be. Some of the component parts of the sharp-edged vapour that came flying up the Thames at London might be mummy-dust, dry atoms from the Temple at Jerusalem, camels' foot-prints, crocodiles' hatching places, loosened grains of expression from the visages of blunt-nosed sphynxes, waifs and strays from caravans of turbaned merchants, vegetation from jungles, frozen snow from the Himalayas. O! It was very very dark upon the Thames, and it was bitter bitter cold.

"And yet," said the voice within the great pea-coat at my side, "you'll have seen a good many rivers too, I dare say?"

"Truly," said I, "when I come to think of it, not a few. From the Niagara, downward to the mountain rivers of Italy, which are like the national spirit—very tame, or chafing suddenly and bursting bounds, only to dwindle away again. The Moselle, and the Rhine, and the Rhone; and the Seine, and the Saone; and the St. Lawrence, Mississippi, and Ohio; and the Tiber, the Po, and the Arno; and the——"

Peacoat coughing as if he had had enough of that, I said no more. I could have carried the catalogue on to a teasing length, though, if I had been in the cruel mind.

"And after all," said he, "this looks so dismal?"

"So awful," I returned, "at night. The Seine at Paris is very gloomy too, at such a time, and is probably the scene of far more crime and greater wickedness; but this river looks so broad and vast, so murky and silent, seems such an image of death in the midst of the great city's life, that——"

That Peacoat coughed again. He *could not* stand my holding forth.

We were in a four-oared Thames Police Galley, lying on our oars in the deep shadow of Southwark Bridge—under

the corner arch on the Surrey side—having come down with the tide from Vauxhall. We were fain to hold on pretty tight, though close in shore, for the river was swollen and the tide running down very strong. We were watching certain water-rats of human growth, and lay in the deep shade as quiet as mice; our light hidden and our scraps of conversation carried on in whispers. Above us, the massive iron girders of the arch were faintly visible, and below us its ponderous shadow seemed to sink down to the bottom of the stream.

We had been lying here some half-an-hour. With our backs to the wind, it is true; but the wind being in a determined temper blew straight through us, and would not take the trouble to go round. I would have boarded a fireship to get into action, and mildly suggested as much to my friend Pea.

"No doubt," says he as patiently as possible; "but shore-going tactics wouldn't do with us. River thieves can always get rid of stolen property in a moment by dropping it overboard. We want to take them *with* the property, so we lurk about and come out upon 'em sharp. If they see us or hear us, over it goes."

Pea's wisdom being indisputable, there was nothing for it but to sit there and be blown through, for another half hour. The water-rats thinking it wise to abscond at the end of that time without commission of felony, we shot out, disappointed, with the tide.

"Grim they look, don't they?" said Pea, seeing me glance over my shoulder at the lights upon the bridge, and downward at their long crooked reflections in the river.

"Very," said I, "and make one think with a shudder of Suicides. What a night for a dreadful leap from that parapet!"

"Aye, but Waterloo's the favourite bridge for making holes in the water from," returned Pea. "By the bye—avast pulling, lads!—would you like to speak to Waterloo on the subject?"

My face confessing a surprised desire to have some friendly conversation with Waterloo Bridge, and my friend Pea being the most obliging of men, we put about, pulled out of the force of the stream, and in place of going at great speed with the tide, began to strive against it, close in shore again. Every colour but black seemed to have

departed from the world. The air was black, the water was black, the barges and hulks were black, the piles were black, the buildings were black, the shadows were only a deeper shade of black upon the black ground. Here and there, a coal fire in an iron cresset blazed upon a wharf; but, one knew that it too had been black a little while ago, and would be black again soon. Uncomfortable rushes of water suggestive of gurgling and drowning, ghostly rattlings of iron chains, dismal clankings of discordant engines, formed the music that accompanied the dip of our oars and their rattling in the rullocks. Even the noises had a black sound to me—as the trumpet sounded red to the blind man.

Our dexterous boat's crew made nothing of the tide, and pulled us gallantly up to Waterloo Bridge. Here Pea and I disembarked, passed under the black stone archway, and climbed the steep stone steps. Within a few feet of their summit, Pea presented me to Waterloo (or an eminent toll-taker representing that structure), muffled up to the eyes in a thick shawl, and amply great-coated and fur-capped.

Waterloo received us with cordiality, and observed of the night that it was "a Searcher." He had been originally called the Strand Bridge, he informed us, but had received his present name at the suggestion of the proprietors, when Parliament had resolved to vote three hundred thousand pound for the erection of a monument in honour of the victory. Parliament took the hint (said Waterloo, with the least flavour of misanthropy) and saved the money. Of course the late Duke of Wellington was the first passenger, and of course he paid his penny, and of course a noble lord preserved it evermore. The Treadle and index at the toll-house (a most ingenious contrivance for rendering fraud impossible), were invented by Mr. Lethbridge, then property-man at Drury Lane Theatre.

Was it suicide, we wanted to know about? said Waterloo. Ha! Well, he had seen a good deal of that work, he did assure us. He had prevented some. Why, one day a woman, poorish looking, came in between the hatch, slapped down a penny, and wanted to go on without the change! Waterloo suspected this, and says to his mate, "give an eye to the gate," and bolted after her. She had got to the third seat between the piers, and was on the parapet just a going over, when he caught her and gave her in charge.

At the police office next morning, she said it was along of trouble and a bad husband.

"Likely enough," observed Waterloo to Pea and myself, as he adjusted his chin in his shawl. "There's a deal of trouble about, you see—and bad husbands too!"

Another time, a young woman at twelve o'clock in the open day, got through, darted along; and, before Waterloo could come near her, jumped upon the parapet, and shot herself over sideways. Alarm given, waterman put off, lucky escape.—Clothes buoyed her up.

"This is where it is," said Waterloo. "If people jump off straight forwards from the middle of the parapet of the bays of the bridge, they are seldom killed by drowning, but are smashed, poor things; that's what *they* are; they dash themselves upon the buttress of the bridge. But you jump off," said Waterloo to me, putting his forefinger in a button-hole of my great-coat; "you jump off from the side of the bay, and you'll tumble, true, into the stream under the arch. What you have got to do, is to mind how you jump in! There was poor Tom Steele from Dublin. Didn't dive! Bless you, didn't dive at all! Fell down so flat into the water, that he broke his breast-bone, and lived two days!"

I asked Waterloo if there were a favourite side of his bridge for this dreadful purpose? He reflected, and thought yes, there was. He should say the Surrey side.

Three decent looking men went through one day, soberly and quietly, and went on abreast for about a dozen yards: when the middle one, he sung out, all of a sudden, "Here goes, Jack!" and was over in a minute.

Body found? Well. Waterloo didn't rightly recollect about that. They were compositors, *they* were.

He considered it astonishing how quick people were! Why, there was a cab came up one Boxing-night, with a young woman in it, who looked, according to Waterloo's opinion of her, a little the worse for liquor; very handsome she was too—very handsome. She stopped the cab at the gate, and said she'd pay the cabman then, which she did, though there was a little hankering about the fare, because at first she didn't seem quite to know where she wanted to be drove to. However, she paid the man, and the toll too, and looking Waterloo in the face (he thought she knew him, don't you see!) said, "I'll finish it somehow!" Well,

the cab went off, leaving Waterloo a little doubtful in his mind, and while it was going on at full speed the young woman jumped out, never fell, hardly staggered, ran along the bridge pavement a little way, passing several people, and jumped over from the second opening. At the inquest it was giv' in evidence that she had been quarrelling at the Hero of Waterloo, and it was brought in jealousy. (One of the results of Waterloo's experience was, that there was a deal of jealousy about.)

"Do we ever get madmen?" said Waterloo, in answer to an inquiry of mine. "Well, we *do* get madmen. Yes, we have had one or two; escaped from 'Sylums, I suppose. One hadn't a halfpenny; and because I wouldn't let him through, he went back a little way, stooped down, took a run, and butted at the hatch like a ram. He smashed his hat rarely, but his head didn't seem no worse—in my opinion on account of his being wrong in it afore. Sometimes people haven't got a halfpenny. If they are really tired and poor we give 'em one and let 'em through. Other people will leave things—pocket-handkerchiefs mostly. I *have* taken cravats and gloves, pocket-knives, tooth-picks, studs, shirt-pins, rings (generally from young gents, early in the morning), but handkerchiefs is the general thing."

"Regular customers?" said Waterloo. "Lord, yes! We have regular customers. One, such a worn-out used-up old file as you can scarcely picter, comes from the Surrey side as regular as ten o'clock at night comes; and goes over, *I* think, to some flash house on the Middlesex side. He comes back, he does, as reg'lar as the clock strikes three in the morning, and then can hardly drag one of his old legs after the other. He always turns down the water-stairs, comes up again, and then goes on down the Waterloo road. He always does the same thing, and never varies a minute. Does it every night—even Sundays."

I asked Waterloo if he had given his mind to the possibility of this particular customer going down the water-stairs at three o'clock some morning, and never coming up again? He didn't think *that* of him, he replied. In fact, it was Waterloo's opinion, founded on his observation of that file, that he know'd a trick worth two of it.

"There's another queer old customer," said Waterloo, "comes over, as punctual as the almanack, at eleven o'clock on the sixth of January, at eleven o'clock on the

fifth of April, at eleven o'clock on the sixth of July, at eleven o'clock on the tenth of October. Drives a shaggy little, rough pony, in a sort of a rattle-trap arm-chair sort of a thing. White hair he has, and white whiskers, and muffles himself up with all manner of shawls. He comes back again the same afternoon, and we never see more of him for three months. He is a captain in the navy—retired—wery old—wery odd—and served with Lord Nelson. He is particular about drawing his pension at Somerset House afore the clock strikes twelve every quarter. I *have* heerd say that he thinks it wouldn't be according to the Act of Parliament, if he didn't draw it afore twelve."

Having related these anecdotes in a natural manner, which was the best warranty in the world for their genuine nature, our friend Waterloo was shrinking deep into his shawl again, as having exhausted his communicative powers and taken in enough east wind, when my other friend Pea in a moment brought him to the surface by asking whether he had not been occasionally the subject of assault and battery in the execution of his duty? Waterloo recovering his spirits, instantly dashed into a new branch of his subject. We learnt how "both these teeth"—here he pointed to the places where two front teeth were not—were knocked out by an ugly customer who one night made a dash at him (Waterloo) while his (the ugly customer's) pal and coadjutor made a dash at the toll-taking apron where the money-pockets were; how Waterloo, letting the teeth go (to Blazes, he observed indefinitely), grappled with the apron-seizer, permitting the ugly one to run away; and how he saved the bank, and captured his man, and consigned him to fine and imprisonment. Also how, on another night, "a Cove" laid hold of Waterloo, then presiding at the horse gate of his bridge, and threw him unceremoniously over his knee, having first cut his head open with his whip. How Waterloo "got right," and started after the Cove all down the Waterloo Road, through Stamford Street, and round to the foot of Blackfriars Bridge, where the Cove "cut into" a public-house. How Waterloo cut in too; but how an aider and abettor of the Cove's, who happened to be taking a promiscuous drain at the bar, stopped Waterloo; and the Cove cut out again, ran across the road down Holland Street, and where not, and into a beer-shop. How Waterloo breaking away from his de-

tainer was close upon the Cove's heels, attended by no end of people who, seeing him running with the blood streaming down his face, thought something worse was "up," and roared Fire! and Murder! on the hopeful chance of the matter in hand being one or both. How the Cove was ignominiously taken, in a shed where he had run to hide, and how at the Police Court they at first wanted to make a sessions job of it; but eventually Waterloo was allowed to be "spoke to," and the Cove made it square with Waterloo by paying his doctor's bill (W. was laid up for a week) and giving him "Three, ten." Likewise we learnt what we had faintly suspected before, that your sporting amateur on the Derby day, albeit a captain, can be—"if he be," as Captain Bobadil observes, "so generously minded"—anything but a man of honour and a gentleman; not sufficiently gratifying his nice sense of humour by the witty scattering of flour and rotten eggs on obtuse civilians, but requiring the further excitement of "bilking the toll," and "pitching into" Waterloo, and "cutting him about the head with his whip;" finally being, when called upon to answer for the assault, what Waterloo described as "Minus," or, as I humbly conceived it, not to be found. Likewise did Waterloo inform us, in reply to my inquiries, admiringly and deferentially preferred through my friend Pea, that the takings at the Bridge had more than doubled in amount, since the reduction of the toll one-half. And being asked if the aforesaid takings included much bad money, Waterloo responded, with a look far deeper than the deepest part of the river, *he* should think not!—and so retired into his shawl for the rest of the night.

Then did Pea and I once more embark in our four-oared galley, and glide swiftly down the river with the tide. And while the shrewd East rasped and notched us, as with jagged razors, did my friend Pea impart to me confidences of interest relating to the Thames Police; we betweenwhiles finding "duty boats" hanging in dark corners under banks, like weeds—our own was a "supervision boat"—and they, as they reported "all right!" flashing their hidden light on us, and we flashing ours on them. These duty boats had one sitter in each: an Inspector: and were rowed "Ran-dan," which—for the information of those who never graduated, as I was once proud to do, under a fireman-waterman and winner of Kean's Prize Wherry: who,

in the course of his tuition, took hundreds of gallons of rum and egg (at my expense) at the various houses of note above and below bridge; not by any means because he liked it, but to cure a weakness in his liver, for which the faculty had particularly recommended it—may be explained as rowed by three men, two pulling an oar each, and one a pair of sculls.

Thus, floating down our black highway, sullenly frowned upon by the knitted brows of Blackfriars, Southwark, and London, each in his lowering turn, I was shown by my friend Pea that there are, in the Thames Police Force, whose district extends from Battersea to Barking Creek, ninety-eight men, eight duty boats, and two supervision boats; and that these go about so silently, and lie in wait in such dark places, and so seem to be nowhere, and so may be anywhere, that they have gradually become a police of prevention, keeping the river almost clear of any great crimes, even while the increased vigilance on shore has made it much harder than of yore to live by "thieving" in the streets. And as to the various kinds of water thieves, said my friend Pea, there were the Tier-rangers, who silently dropped alongside the tiers of shipping in the Pool, by night, and who, going to the companion-head, listened for two snores—snore number one, the skipper's; snore number two, the mate's—mates and skippers always snoring great guns, and being dead sure to be hard at it if they had turned in and were asleep. Hearing the double fire, down went the Rangers into the skippers' cabins; groped for the skippers' inexpressibles, which it was the custom of those gentlemen to shake off, watch, money, braces, boots, and all together, on the floor; and therewith made off as silently as might be. Then there were the Lumpers, or labourers employed to unload vessels. They wore loose canvas jackets with a broad hem in the bottom, turned inside, so as to form a large circular pocket in which they could conceal, like clowns in pantomimes, packages of surprising sizes. A great deal of property was stolen in this manner (Pea confided to me) from steamers; first, because steamers carry a larger number of small packages than other ships; next, because of the extreme rapidity with which they are obliged to be unladen for their return voyages. The Lumpers dispose of their booty easily to marine store dealers, and the only remedy to be suggested is that

marine store shops should be licensed, and thus brought under the eye of the police as rigidly as public-houses. Lumpers also smuggle goods ashore for the crews of vessels. The smuggling of tobacco is so considerable, that it is well worth the while of the sellers of smuggled tobacco to use hydraulic presses, to squeeze a single pound into a package small enough to be contained in an ordinary pocket. Next, said my friend Pea, there were the Truckers—less thieves than smugglers, whose business it was to land more considerable parcels of goods than the Lumpers could manage. They sometimes sold articles of grocery and so forth, to the crews, in order to cloak their real calling, and get aboard without suspicion. Many of them had boats of their own, and made money. Besides these, there were the Dredgermen, who, under pretence of dredging up coals and such like from the bottom of the river, hung about barges and other undecked craft, and when they saw an opportunity, threw any property they could lay their hands on overboard: in order slyly to dredge it up when the vessel was gone. Sometimes, they dexterously used their dredges to whip away anything that might lie within reach. Some of them were mighty neat at this, and the accomplishment was called dry dredging. Then, there was a vast deal of property, such as copper nails, sheathing, hardwood, &c., habitually brought away by shipwrights and other workmen from their employers' yards, and disposed of to marine store dealers, many of whom escaped detection through hard swearing, and their extraordinary artful ways of accounting for the possession of stolen property. Likewise, there were special-pleading practitioners, for whom barges "drifted away of their own selves"—they having no hand in it, except first cutting them loose, and afterwards plundering them—innocents, meaning no harm, who had the misfortune to observe those foundlings wandering about the Thames.

We were now going in and out, with little noise and great nicety, among the tiers of shipping, whose many hulls, lying close together, rose out of the water like black streets. Here and there, a Scotch, an Irish, or a foreign steamer, getting up her steam as the tide made, looked, with her great chimney and high sides, like a quiet factory among the common buildings. Now, the streets opened into clearer spaces, now contracted into alleys; but the

tiers were so like houses, in the dark, that I could almost have believed myself in the narrower byeways of Venice. Everything was wonderfully still; for, it wanted full three hours of flood, and nothing seemed awake but a dog here and there.

So we took no Tier-rangers captive, nor any Lumpers, nor Truckers, nor Dredgermen, nor other evil-disposed person or persons; but went ashore at Wapping, where the old Thames Police office is now a station-house, and where the old Court, with its cabin windows looking on the river, is a quaint charge room: with nothing worse in it usually than a stuffed cat in a glass case, and a portrait, pleasant to behold, of a rare old Thames Police officer, Mr. Superintendent Evans, now succeeded by his son. We looked over the charge books, admirably kept, and found the prevention so good that there were not five hundred entries (including drunken and disorderly) in a whole year. Then, we looked into the storeroom; where there was an oakum smell, and a nautical seasoning of dreadnought clothing, rope yarn, boat hooks, sculls and oars, spare stretchers, rudders, pistols, cutlasses, and the like. Then, into the cell, aired high up in the wooden wall through an opening like a kitchen plate-rack: wherein there was a drunken man, not at all warm, and very wishful to know if it were morning yet. Then, into a better sort of watch and ward room, where there was a squadron of stone bottles drawn up, ready to be filled with hot water and applied to any unfortunate creature who might be brought in apparently drowned. Finally, we shook hands with our worthy friend Pea, and ran all the way to Tower Hill, under strong Police suspicion occasionally, before we got warm.

THE NOBLE SAVAGE.

To come to the point at once, I beg to say that I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage. I consider him a prodigious nuisance, and an enormous superstition. His calling rum fire-water and me a pale-face, wholly fail to reconcile me to him. I don't care what he calls me. I call him a savage, and I call a savage a something highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth. I think a mere gent (which I take to be the lowest form of civilisation) better than a howling, whistling, clucking, stamping, jumping, tearing savage. It is all one to me, whether he sticks a fish-bone through his visage, or bits of trees through the lobes of his ears, or bird's feathers in his head; whether he flattens his hair between two boards, or spreads his nose over the breadth of his face, or drags his lower lip down by great weights, or blackens his teeth, or knocks them out, or paints one cheek red and the other blue, or tattoos himself, or oils himself, or rubs his body with fat, or crimps it with knives. Yielding to whichsoever of these agreeable eccentricities, he is a savage—cruel, false, thievish, murderous; addicted more or less to grease, entrails, and beastly customs; a wild animal with the questionable gift of boasting; a conceited, tiresome, bloodthirsty, monotonous humbug.

Yet it is extraordinary to observe how some people will talk about him, as they talk about the good old times; how they will regret his disappearance, in the course of this world's development, from such and such lands where his absence is a blessed relief and an indispensable preparation for the sowing of the very first seeds of any influence that can exalt humanity; how, even with the evidence of himself before them, they will either be determined to believe, or will suffer themselves to be persuaded into believing, that he is something which their five senses tell them he is not.

There was Mr. Catlin, some few years ago, with his Ojibbeway Indians. Mr. Catlin was an energetic earnest man, who had lived among more tribes of Indians than I need reckon up here, and who had written a picturesque

and glowing book about them. With his party of Indians squatting and spitting on the table before him, or dancing their miserable jigs after their own dreary manner, he called, in all good faith, upon his civilised audience to take notice of their symmetry and grace, their perfect limbs, and the exquisite expression of their pantomime; and his civilised audience, in all good faith, complied and admired. Whereas, as mere animals, they were wretched creatures, very low in the scale and very poorly formed; and as men and women possessing any power of truthful dramatic expression by means of action, they were no better than the chorus at an Italian Opera in England—and would have been worse if such a thing were possible.

Mine are no new views of the noble savage. The greatest writers on natural history found him out long ago. BUFFON knew what he was, and showed why he is the sulky tyrant that he is to his women, and how it happens (Heaven be praised!) that his race is spare in numbers. For evidence of the quality of his moral nature, pass himself for a moment and refer to his "faithful dog." Has he ever improved a dog, or attached a dog, since his nobility first ran wild in woods, and was brought down (at a very long shot) by POPE? Or does the animal that is the friend of man, always degenerate in his low society?

It is not the miserable nature of the noble savage that is the new thing; it is the whimpering over him with maudlin admiration, and the affecting to regret him, and the drawing of any comparison of advantage between the blemishes of civilisation and the tenor of his swinish life. There may have been a change now and then in those diseased absurdities, but there is none in him.

Think of the Bushmen. Think of the two men and the two women who have been exhibited about England for some years. Are the majority of persons—who remember the horrid little leader of that party in his festering bundle of hides, with his filth and his antipathy to water, and his straddled legs, and his odious eyes shaded by his brutal hand, and his cry of "Qu-u-u-u-aaa!" (Bosjesman for something desperately insulting I have no doubt)—conscious of an affectionate yearning towards that noble savage, or is it idiosyncratic in me to abhor, detest, abominate, and abjure him? I have no reserve on this subject, and will frankly state that, setting aside that stage of the entertain-

ment when he counterfeited the death of some creature he had shot, by laying his head on his hand and shaking his left leg—at which time I think it would have been justifiable homicide to slay him—I have never seen that group sleeping, smoking, and expectorating round their brazier, but I have sincerely desired that something might happen to the charcoal smouldering therein, which would cause the immediate suffocation of the whole of the noble strangers.

There is at present a party of Zulu Kaffirs exhibiting at the St. George's Gallery, Hyde Park Corner, London. These noble savages are represented in a most agreeable manner; they are seen in an elegant theatre, fitted with appropriate scenery of great beauty, and they are described in a very sensible and unpretending lecture, delivered with a modesty which is quite a pattern to all similar exponents. Though extremely ugly, they are much better shaped than such of their predecessors as I have referred to; and they are rather picturesque to the eye, though far from odoriferous to the nose. What a visitor left to his own interpretings and imaginings might suppose these noblemen to be about, when they give vent to that pantomimic expression which is quite settled to be the natural gift of the noble savage, I cannot possibly conceive; for it is so much too luminous for my personal civilisation that it conveys no idea to my mind beyond a general stamping, ramping, and raving, remarkable (as everything in savage life is) for its dire uniformity. But let us—with the interpreter's assistance, of which I for one stand so much in need—see what the noble savage does in Zulu Kaffirland.

The noble savage sets a king to reign over him, to whom he submits his life and limbs without a murmur or question, and whose whole life is passed chin deep in a lake of blood; but who, after killing incessantly, is in his turn killed by his relations and friends, the moment a grey hair appears on his head. All the noble savage's wars with his fellow-savages (and he takes no pleasure in anything else) are wars of extermination—which is the best thing I know of him, and the most comfortable to my mind when I look at him. He has no moral feelings of any kind, sort, or description; and his "mission" may be summed up as simply diabolical.

The ceremonies with which he faintly diversifies his life are, of course, of a kindred nature. If he wants a wife he

appears before the kennel of the gentleman whom he has selected for his father-in-law, attended by a party of male friends of a very strong flavour, who screech and whistle and stamp an offer of so many cows for the young lady's hand. The chosen father-in-law—also supported by a high-flavoured party of male friends—screeches, whistles, and yells (being seated on the ground, he can't stamp) that there never was such a daughter in the market as his daughter, and that he must have six more cows. The son-in-law and his select circle of backers, screech, whistle, stamp, and yell in reply, that they will give three more cows. The father-in-law (an old deluder, overpaid at the beginning) accepts four, and rises to bind the bargain. The whole party, the young lady included, then falling into epileptic convulsions, and screeching, whistling, stamping, and yelling together—and nobody taking any notice of the young lady (whose charms are not to be thought of without a shudder)—the noble savage is considered married, and his friends make demoniacal leaps at him by way of congratulation.

When the noble savage finds himself a little unwell, and mentions the circumstance to his friends, it is immediately perceived that he is under the influence of witchcraft. A learned personage, called an Imyanger or Witch Doctor, is immediately sent for to Nooker the Umtargartie, or smell out the witch. The male inhabitants of the kraal being seated on the ground, the learned doctor, got up like a grizzly bear, appears, and administers a dance of a most terrific nature, during the exhibition of which remedy he incessantly gnashes his teeth, and howls:—"I am the original physician to Nooker the Umtargartie. Yow yow yow! No connection with any other establishment. Till till till! All other Umtargarties are feigned Umtargarties, Boroo Boroo! but I perceive here a genuine and real Umtargartie, Hoosh Hoosh Hoosh! in whose blood I, the original Imyanger and Nookerer, Blizzerum Boo! will wash these bear's claws of mine. O yow yow yow!" All this time the learned physician is looking out among the attentive faces for some unfortunate man who owes him a cow, or who has given him any small offence, or against whom, without offence, he has conceived a spite. Him he never fails to Nooker as the Umtargartie, and he is instantly killed. In the absence of such an individual, the

usual practice is to Nooker the quietest and most gentlemanly person in company. But the nookering is invariably followed on the spot by the butchering.

Some of the noble savages in whom Mr. Catlin was so strongly interested, and the diminution of whose numbers, by rum and small-pox, greatly affected him, had a custom not unlike this, though much more appalling and disgusting in its odious details.

The women being at work in the fields, hoeing the Indian corn, and the noble savage being asleep in the shade, the chief has sometimes the condescension to come forth, and lighten the labour by looking at it. On these occasions, he seats himself in his own savage chair, and is attended by his shield-bearer: who holds over his head a shield of cow-hide—in shape like an immense mussel shell—fearfully and wonderfully, after the manner of a theatrical supernumerary. But lest the great man should forget his greatness in the contemplation of the humble works of agriculture, there suddenly rushes in a poet, retained for the purpose, called a Praiser. This literary gentleman wears a leopard's head over his own, and a dress of tigers' tails; he has the appearance of having come express on his hind legs from the Zoological Gardens; and he incontinently strikes up the chief's praises, plunging and tearing all the while. There is a frantic wickedness in this brute's manner of worrying the air, and gnashing out, "O what a delightful chief he is! O what a delicious quantity of blood he sheds! O how majestically he laps it up! O how charmingly cruel he is! O how he tears the flesh of his enemies and crunches the bones! O how like the tiger and the leopard and the wolf and the bear he is! O, row row row row, how fond I am of him!" which might tempt the Society of Friends to charge at a hand-gallop into the Swartz-Kop location and exterminate the whole kraal.

When war is afoot among the noble savages—which is always—the chief holds a council to ascertain whether it is the opinion of his brothers and friends in general that the enemy shall be exterminated. On this occasion, after the performance of an Umsebeuza, or war song,—which is exactly like all the other songs,—the chief makes a speech to his brothers and friends, arranged in single file. No particular order is observed during the delivery of this address, but every gentleman who finds himself excited by

the subject, instead of crying "Hear, hear!" as is the custom with us, darts from the rank and tramples out the life, or crushes the skull, or mashes the face, or scoops out the eyes, or breaks the limbs, or performs a whirlwind of atrocities on the body, of an imaginary enemy. Several gentlemen becoming thus excited at once, and pounding away without the least regard to the orator, that illustrious person is rather in the position of an orator in an Irish House of Commons. But, several of these scenes of savage life bear a strong generic resemblance to an Irish election, and I think would be extremely well received and understood at Cork.

In all these ceremonies the noble savage holds forth to the utmost possible extent about himself; from which (to turn him to some civilised account) we may learn, I think, that as egotism is one of the most offensive and contemptible littlenesses a civilised man can exhibit, so it is really incompatible with the interchange of ideas; inasmuch as if we all talked about ourselves we should soon have no listeners, and must be all yelling and screeching at once on our own separate accounts: making society hideous. It is my opinion that if we retained in us anything of the noble savage, we could not get rid of it too soon. But the fact is clearly otherwise. Upon the wife and dowry question, substituting coin for cows, we have assuredly nothing of the Zulu Kaffir left. The endurance of despotism is one great distinguishing mark of a savage always. The improving world has quite got the better of that too. In like manner, Paris is a civilised city, and the Théâtre Français a highly civilised theatre; and we shall never hear, and never have heard in these later days (of course) of the Praiser *there*. No, no, civilised poets have better work to do. As to Nookering Umtargarties, there are no pretended Umtargarties in Europe, and no European powers to Nooker them; that would be mere spydom, subornation, small malice, superstition, and false pretence. And as to private Umtargarties, are we not in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-three, with spirits rapping at our doors?

To conclude as I began. My position is, that if we have anything to learn from the Noble Savage, it is what to avoid. His virtues are a fable; his happiness is a delusion; his nobility, nonsense. We have no greater justification for being cruel to the miserable object, than for

being cruel to a WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE or an ISAAC NEWTON; but he passes away before an immeasurably better and higher power than ever ran wild in any earthly woods, and the world will be all the better when his place knows him no more.

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*FRAUDS ON THE FAIRIES.

WE may assume that we are not singular in entertaining a very great tenderness for the fairy literature of our childhood. What enchanted us then, and is captivating a million of young fancies now, has, at the same blessed time of life, enchanted vast hosts of men and women who have done their long day's work, and laid their grey heads down to rest. It would be hard to estimate the amount of gentleness and mercy that has made its way among us through these slight channels. Forbearance, courtesy, consideration for the poor and aged, kind treatment of animals, the love of nature, abhorrence of tyranny and brute force—many such good things have been first nourished in the child's heart by this powerful aid. It has greatly helped to keep us, in some sense, ever young, by preserving through our worldly ways one slender track not overgrown with weeds, where we may walk with children, sharing their delights.

In an utilitarian age, of all other times, it is a matter of grave importance that Fairy tales should be respected. Our English red tape is too magnificently red ever to be employed in the tying up of such trifles, but every one who has considered the subject knows full well that a nation without fancy, without some romance, never did, never can, never will, hold a great place under the sun. The theatre, having done its worst to destroy these admirable fictions—and having in a most exemplary manner destroyed itself, its artists, and its audiences, in that perversion of its duty—it becomes doubly important that the little books themselves, nurseries of fancy as they are, should be preserved. To preserve them in their usefulness, they must be as much preserved in their simplicity, and purity, and innocent extravagance, as if they were actual fact. Whosoever alters them to suit his own opinions, whatever they

are, is guilty, to our thinking, of an act of presumption, and appropriates to himself what does not belong to him.

We have lately observed, with pain, the intrusion of a Whole Hog of unwieldy dimensions into the fairy flower garden. The rooting of the animal among the roses would in itself have awakened in us nothing but indignation; our pain arises from his being violently driven in by a man of genius, our own beloved friend, MR. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK. That incomparable artist is, of all men, the last who should lay his exquisite hand on fairy text. In his own art he understands it so perfectly, and illustrates it so beautifully, so humorously, so wisely, that he should never lay down his etching needle to "edit" the Ogre, to whom with that little instrument he can render such extraordinary justice. But, to "editing" Ogres, and Hop-o'-my-thumbs, and their families, our dear moralist has in a rash moment taken, as a means of propagating the doctrines of Total Abstinence, Prohibition of the sale of spirituous liquors, Free Trade, and Popular Education. For the introduction of these topics, he has altered the text of a fairy story; and against his right to do any such thing we protest with all our might and main. Of his likewise altering it to advertise that excellent series of plates, "The Bottle," we say nothing more than that we foresee a new and improved edition of Goody Two Shoes, edited by E. Moses and Son; of the Dervish with the box of ointment, edited by Professor Holloway; and of Jack and the Beanstalk, edited by Mary Wedlake, the popular authoress of "Do you bruise your oats yet?"

Now, it makes not the least difference to our objection whether we agree or disagree with our worthy friend, Mr. Cruikshank, in the opinions he interpolates upon an old fairy story. Whether good or bad in themselves, they are, in that relation, like the famous definition of a weed; a thing growing up in a wrong place. He has no greater moral justification in altering the harmless little books than we should have in altering his best etchings. If such a precedent were followed we must soon become disgusted with the old stories into which modern personages so obtruded themselves, and the stories themselves must soon be lost. With seven Blue Beards in the field, each coming at a galop from his own platform mounted on a foaming hobby, a generation or two hence would not know which

was which, and the great original Blue Beard would be confounded with the counterfeits. Imagine a Total Abstinence edition of Robinson Crusoe, with the rum left out. Imagine a Peace edition, with the gunpowder left out, and the rum left in. Imagine a Vegetarian edition, with the goat's flesh left out. Imagine a Kentucky edition, to introduce a flogging of that 'tarnal old nigger Friday, twice a week. Imagine an Aborigines Protection Society edition, to deny the cannibalism and make Robinson embrace the amiable savages whenever they landed. Robinson Crusoe would be edited out of his island in a hundred years, and the island would be swallowed up in the editorial ocean.

Among the other learned professions we have now the Platform profession, chiefly exercised by a new and meritorious class of commercial travellers who go about to take the sense of meetings on various articles: some, of a very superior description: some, not quite so good. Let us write the story of Cinderella, "edited" by one of these gentlemen, doing a good stroke of business, and having a rather extensive mission.

Once upon a time, a rich man and his wife were the parents of a lovely daughter. She was a beautiful child, and became, at her own desire, a member of the Juvenile Bands of Hope when she was only four years of age. When this child was only nine years of age her mother died, and all the Juvenile Bands of Hope in her district—the Central district, number five hundred and twenty-seven—formed in a procession of two and two, amounting to fifteen hundred, and followed her to the grave, singing chorus Number forty-two, "O come," etc. This grave was outside the town, and under the direction of the Local Board of Health, which reported at certain stated intervals to the General Board of Health, Whitehall.

The motherless little girl was very sorrowful for the loss of her mother, and so was her father too, at first; but, after a year was over, he married again—a very cross widow lady, with two proud tyrannical daughters as cross as herself. He was aware that he could have made his marriage with this lady a civil process by simply making a declaration before a Registrar; but he was averse to this course on religious grounds, and, being a member of the

Montgolfian persuasion, was married according to the ceremonies of that respectable church by the Reverend Jared Jooks, who improved the occasion.

He did not live long with his disagreeable wife. Having been shamefully accustomed to shave with warm water instead of cold, which he ought to have used (see Medical Appendix C. and C.), his undermined constitution could not bear up against her temper, and he soon died. Then, this orphan was cruelly treated by her stepmother and the two daughters, and was forced to do the dirtiest of the kitchen work; to scour the saucepans, wash the dishes, and light the fires—which did not consume their own smoke, but emitted a dark vapour prejudicial to the bronchial tubes. The only warm place in the house where she was free from ill-treatment was the kitchen chimney-corner; and as she used to sit down there, among the cinders, when her work was done, the proud fine sisters gave her the name of Cinderella.

About this time, the King of the land, who never made war against anybody, and allowed everybody to make war against him—which was the reason why his subjects were the greatest manufacturers on earth, and always lived in security and peace—gave a great feast, which was to last two days. This splendid banquet was to consist entirely of artichokes and gruel; and from among those who were invited to it, and to hear the delightful speeches after dinner, the King's son was to choose a bride for himself. The proud fine sisters were invited, but nobody knew anything about poor Cinderella, and she was to stay at home.

She was so sweet-tempered, however, that she assisted the haughty creatures to dress, and bestowed her admirable taste upon them as freely as if they had been kind to her. Neither did she laugh when they broke seventeen stay-laces in dressing; for, although she wore no stays herself, being sufficiently acquainted with the anatomy of the human figure to be aware of the destructive effects of tight-lacing, she always reserved her opinions on that subject for the Regenerative Record (price three half-pence in a neat wrapper), which all good people take in, and to which she was a contributor.

At length the wished-for moment arrived, and the proud fine sisters swept away to the feast and speeches, leaving Cinderella in the chimney-corner. But, she could always

occupy her mind with the general question of the Ocean Penny Postage, and she had in her pocket an unread Oration on that subject, made by the well-known Orator, Nehemiah Nicks. She was lost in the fervid eloquence of that talented apostle when she became aware of the presence of one of those female relatives which (it may not be generally known) it is not lawful for a man to marry. I allude to her grandmother.

"Why so solitary, my child?" said the old lady to Cinderella.

"Alas, grandmother," returned the poor girl, "my sisters have gone to the feast and speeches, and here sit I in the ashes, Cinderella!"

"Never," cried the old lady with animation, "shall one of the Band of Hope despair. Run into the garden, my dear, and fetch me an American Pumpkin! American, because in some parts of that independent country, there are prohibitory laws against the sale of alcoholic drinks in any form. Also, because America produced (among many great pumpkins) the glory of her sex, Mrs. Colonel Bloomer. None but an American Pumpkin will do, my child."

Cinderella ran into the garden, and brought the largest American pumpkin she could find. This virtuously democratic vegetable her grandmother immediately changed into a splendid coach. Then, she sent her for six mice from the mouse-trap which she changed into prancing horses, free from the obnoxious and oppressive post-horse duty. Then, to the rat-trap in the stable for a rat, which she changed to a state-coachman, not amenable to the iniquitous assessed taxes. Then, to look behind a watering-pot for six lizards, which she changed into six footmen, each with a petition in his hand ready to present to the Prince, signed by fifty thousand persons, in favour of the early closing movement.

"But, grandmother," said Cinderella, stopping in the midst of her delight, and looking at her clothes, "how can I go to the palace in these miserable rags?"

"Be not uneasy about that, my dear," returned her grandmother.

Upon which the old lady touched her with her wand, her rags disappeared, and she was beautifully dressed. Not in the present costume of the female sex, which has been proved to be at once grossly immodest and absurdly incon-

venient, but in rich sky-blue satin pantaloons gathered at the ankle, a puce-coloured satin pelisse sprinkled with silver flowers, and a very broad Leghorn hat. The hat was chastely ornamented with a rainbow-coloured ribbon hanging in two bell-pulls down the back; the pantaloons were ornamented with a golden stripe; and the effect of the whole was unspeakably sensible, feminine, and retiring. Lastly, the old lady put on Cinderella's feet a pair of shoes made of glass: observing that but for the abolition of the duty on that article, it never could have been devoted to such a purpose; the effect of all such taxes being to cramp invention, and embarrass the producer, to the manifest injury of the consumer. When the old lady had made these wise remarks, she dismissed Cinderella to the feast and speeches, charging her by no means to remain after twelve o'clock at night.

The arrival of Cinderella at the Monster Gathering produced a great excitement. As a delegate from the United States had just moved that the King do take the chair, and as the motion had been seconded and carried unanimously, the King himself could not go forth to receive her. But His Royal Highness the Prince (who was to move the second resolution), went to the door to hand her from her carriage. This virtuous Prince, being completely covered from head to foot with Total Abstinence Medals, shone as if he were attired in complete armour; while the inspiring strains of the Peace Brass Band in the gallery (composed of the Lambkin Family, eighteen in number, who cannot be too much encouraged) awakened additional enthusiasm.

The King's son handed Cinderella to one of the reserved seats for pink tickets, on the platform, and fell in love with her immediately. His appetite deserted him; he scarcely tasted his artichokes, and merely trifled with his gruel. When the speeches began, and Cinderella, wrapped in the eloquence of the two inspired delegates who occupied the entire evening in speaking to the first Resolution, occasionally cried, "Hear, hear!" the sweetness of her voice completed her conquest of the Prince's heart. But, indeed the whole male portion of the assembly loved her —and doubtless would have done so, even if she had been less beautiful, in consequence of the contrast which her dress presented to the bold and ridiculous garments of the other ladies.

At a quarter before twelve the second inspired delegate having drunk all the water in the decanter, and fainted away, the King put the question, "That this Meeting do now adjourn until to-morrow." Those who were of that opinion holding up their hands, and then those who were of the contrary, theirs, there appeared an immense majority in favour of the resolution, which was consequently carried. Cinderella got home in safety and heard nothing all that night, or all next day, but the praises of the unknown lady with the sky-blue satin pantaloons.

When the time for the feast and speeches came round again, the cross stepmother and the proud fine daughters went out in good time to secure their places. As soon as they were gone, Cinderella's grandmother returned and changed her as before. Amid a blast of welcome from the Lambkin family, she was again handed to the pink seat on the platform by His Royal Highness.

This gifted Prince was a powerful speaker, and had the evening before him. He rose at precisely ten minutes before eight, and was greeted with tumultuous cheers and waving of handkerchiefs. When the excitement had in some degree subsided, he proceeded to address the meeting: who were never tired of listening to the speeches, as no good people ever are. He held them enthralled for four hours and a quarter. Cinderella forgot the time, and hurried away so when she heard the first stroke of twelve, that her beautiful dress changed back to her old rags at the door, and she left one of her glass shoes behind. The Prince took it up, and vowed—that is, made a declaration before a magistrate; for he objected on principle to the multiplying of oaths—that he would only marry the charming creature to whom that shoe belonged.

He accordingly caused an advertisement to that effect to be inserted in all the newspapers; for, the advertisement duty, an impost most unjust in principle and most unfair in operation, did not exist in that country; neither was the stamp on newspapers known in that land—which had as many newspapers as the United States, and got as much good out of them. Innumerable ladies answered the advertisement and pretended that the shoe was theirs; but, every one of them was unable to get her foot into it. The proud fine sisters answered it, and tried their feet with no greater success. Then, Cinderella, who had answered it

too, came forward amidst their scornful jeers, and the shoe slipped on in a moment. It is a remarkable tribute to the improved and sensible fashion of the dress her grandmother had given her, that if she had worn it the Prince would probably never have seen her feet.

The marriage was solemnised with great rejoicing. When the honeymoon was over, the King retired from public life, and was succeeded by the Prince. Cinderella, being now a queen, applied herself to the government of the country on enlightened, liberal, and free principles. All the people who ate anything she did not eat, or who drank anything she did not drink, were imprisoned for life. All the newspaper offices from which any doctrine proceeded that was not her doctrine, were burnt down. All the public speakers proved to demonstration that if there were any individual on the face of the earth who differed from them in anything, that individual was a designing ruffian and an abandoned monster. She also threw open the right of voting, and of being elected to public offices, and of making the laws, to the whole of her sex; who thus came to be always gloriously occupied with public life, and whom nobody dared to love. And they all lived happily ever afterwards.

Frauds on the Fairies once permitted, we see little reason why they may not come to this, and great reason why they may. The Vicar of Wakefield was wisest when he was tired of being always wise. The world is too much with us, early and late. Leave this precious old escape from it, alone.

THE LONG VOYAGE.

When the wind is blowing and the sleet or rain is driving against the dark windows, I love to sit by the fire, thinking of what I have read in books of voyage and travel. Such books have had a strong fascination for my mind from my earliest childhood; and I wonder it should have come to pass that I never have been round the world, never have been shipwrecked, ice-environed, tomahawked, or eaten.

Sitting on my ruddy hearth in the twilight of New

Year's Eve, I find incidents of travel rise around me from all the latitudes and longitudes of the globe. They observe no order or sequence, but appear and vanish as they will—"come like shadows, so depart." Columbus, alone upon the sea with his disaffected crew, looks over the waste of waters from his high station on the poop of his ship, and sees the first uncertain glimmer of the light, "rising and falling with the waves, like a torch in the bark of some fisherman," which is the shining star of a new world. Bruce is caged in Abyssinia, surrounded by the gory horrors which shall often startle him out of his sleep at home when years have passed away. Franklin, come to the end of his unhappy overland journey—would that it had been his last!—lies perishing of hunger with his brave companions: each emaciated figure stretched upon its miserable bed without the power to rise: all, dividing the weary days between their prayers, their remembrances of the dear ones at home, and conversation on the pleasures of eating; the last-named topic being ever present to them, likewise, in their dreams. All the African travellers, wayworn, solitary and sad, submit themselves again to drunken, murderous, man-selling despots, of the lowest order of humanity; and Mungo Park, fainting under a tree and succoured by a woman, gratefully remembers how his Good Samaritan has always come to him in woman's shape, the wide world over.

A shadow on the wall in which my mind's eye can discern some traces of a rocky sea-coast, recalls to me a fearful story of travel derived from that unpromising narrator of such stories, a parliamentary blue-book. A convict is its chief figure, and this man escapes with other prisoners from a penal settlement. It is an island, and they seize a boat, and get to the main land. Their way is by a rugged and precipitous sea-shore, and they have no earthly hope of ultimate escape, for the party of soldiers despatched by an easier course to cut them off, must inevitably arrive at their distant bourne long before them, and retake them if by any hazard they survive the horrors of the way. Famine, as they all must have foreseen, besets them early in their course. Some of the party die and are eaten; some are murdered by the rest and eaten. This one awful creature eats his fill, and sustains his strength, and lives on to be recaptured and taken back. The unrelatable ex-

periences through which he has passed have been so tremendous, that he is not hanged as he might be, but goes back to his old chained-gang work. A little time, and he tempts one other prisoner away, seizes another boat, and flies once more—necessarily in the old hopeless direction, for he can take no other. He is soon cut off, and met by the pursuing party face to face, upon the beach. He is alone. In his former journey he acquired an inappeasable relish for his dreadful food. He urged the new man away, expressly to kill him and eat him. In the pockets on one side of his coarse convict-dress, are portions of the man's body, on which he is regaling; in the pockets on the other side is an untouched store of salted pork (stolen before he left the island) for which he has no appetite. He is taken back, and he is hanged. But I shall never see that sea-beach on the wall or in the fire, without him, solitary monster, eating as he prowls along, while the sea rages and rises at him.

Captain Bligh (a worse man to be entrusted with arbitrary power there could scarcely be) is handed over the side of the Bounty, and turned adrift on the wide ocean in an open boat, by order of Fletcher Christian, one of his officers, at this very minute. Another flash of my fire, and "Thursday October Christian," five-and-twenty years of age, son of the dead and gone Fletcher by a savage mother, leaps aboard His Majesty's ship Briton, hove-to off Pitcairn's Island; says his simple grace before eating, in good English; and knows that a pretty little animal on board is called a dog, because in his childhood he had heard of such strange creatures from his father and the other mutineers, grown grey under the shade of the bread-fruit trees, speaking of their lost country far away.

See the Halsewell, East Indiaman outward bound, driving madly on a January night towards the rocks near Seacombe, on the island of Purbeck! The captain's two dear daughters are aboard, and five other ladies. The ship has been driving many hours, has seven feet water in her hold, and her mainmast has been cut away. The description of her loss, familiar to me from my early boyhood, seems to be read aloud as she rushes to her destiny.

"About two in the morning of Friday the sixth of January, the ship still driving, and approaching very fast to the

shore, Mr. Henry Meriton, the second mate, went again into the cuddy, where the captain then was. Another conversation taking place, Captain Pierce expressed extreme anxiety for the preservation of his beloved daughters, and earnestly asked the officer if he could devise any method of saving them. On his answering with great concern, that he feared it would be impossible, but that their only chance would be to wait for morning, the captain lifted up his hands in silent and distressful ejaculation.

"At this dreadful moment, the ship struck, with such violence as to dash the heads of those standing in the cuddy against the deck above them, and the shock was accompanied by a shriek of horror that burst at one instant from every quarter of the ship.

"Many of the seamen, who had been remarkably inattentive and remiss in their duty during great part of the storm, now poured upon deck, where no exertions of the officers could keep them, while their assistance might have been useful. They had actually skulked in their hammocks, leaving the working of the pumps and other necessary labours to the officers of the ship, and the soldiers, who had made uncommon exertions. Roused by a sense of their danger, the same seamen, at this moment, in frantic exclamations, demanded of heaven and their fellow-sufferers that succour which their own efforts, timely made, might possibly have procured.

"The ship continued to beat on the rocks; and soon bilging, fell with her broadside towards the shore. When she struck, a number of the men climbed up the ensign-staff, under an apprehension of her immediately going to pieces.

"Mr. Meriton, at this crisis, offered to these unhappy beings the best advice which could be given; he recommended that all should come to the side of the ship lying lowest on the rocks, and singly to take the opportunities which might then offer, of escaping to the shore.

"Having thus provided, to the utmost of his power, for the safety of the desponding crew, he returned to the round-house, where, by this time, all the passengers and most of the officers had assembled. The latter were employed in offering consolation to the unfortunate ladies; and, with unparalleled magnanimity, suffering their compassion for the fair and amiable companions of their misfortunes to prevail over the sense of their own danger.

"In this charitable work of comfort, Mr. Meriton now joined, by assurances of his opinion, that the ship would hold together till the morning, when all would be safe. Captain Pierce, observing one of the young gentlemen loud in his exclamations of terror, and frequently cry that the ship was parting, cheerfully bid him be quiet, remarking that though the ship should go to pieces, he would not, but would be safe enough.

"It is difficult to convey a correct idea of the scene of this deplorable catastrophe, without describing the place where it happened. The Halsewell struck on the rocks at a part of the shore where the cliff is of vast height, and rises almost perpendicular from its base. But at this particular spot, the foot of the cliff is excavated into a cavern of ten or twelve yards in depth, and of breadth equal to the length of a large ship. The sides of the cavern are so nearly upright, as to be of extremely difficult access; and the bottom is strewed with sharp and uneven rocks, which seem, by some convulsion of the earth, to have been detached from its roof.

"The ship lay with her broadside opposite to the mouth of this cavern, with her whole length stretched almost from side to side of it. But when she struck, it was too dark for the unfortunate persons on board to discover the real magnitude of the danger, and the extreme horror of such a situation.

"In addition to the company already in the round-house, they had admitted three black women and two soldiers' wives; who, with the husband of one of them, had been allowed to come in, though the seamen, who had tumultuously demanded entrance to get the lights, had been opposed and kept out by Mr. Rogers and Mr. Brimer, the third and fifth mates. The numbers there were, therefore, now increased to near fifty. Captain Pierce sat on a chair, a cot, or some other movable, with a daughter on each side, whom he alternately pressed to his affectionate breast. The rest of the melancholy assembly were seated on the deck, which was strewed with musical instruments, and the wreck of furniture and other articles.

"Here also Mr. Meriton, after having cut several wax-candles in pieces, and stuck them up in various parts of the round-house, and lighted up all the glass lanthorns he could find, took his seat, intending to wait the approach of

dawn; and then assist the partners of his dangers to escape. But, observing that the poor ladies appeared parched and exhausted, he brought a basket of oranges and prevailed on some of them to refresh themselves by sucking a little of the juice. At this time they were all tolerably composed, except Miss Mansel, who was in hysteric fits on the floor of the deck of the round-house.

"But on Mr. Meriton's return to the company, he perceived a considerable alteration in the appearance of the ship; the sides were visibly giving way; the deck seemed to be lifting, and he discovered other strong indications that she could not hold much longer together. On this account, he attempted to go forward to look out, but immediately saw that the ship had separated in the middle, and that the fore part having changed its position, lay rather further out towards the sea. In such an emergency, when the next moment might plunge him into eternity, he determined to seize the present opportunity, and follow the example of the crew and the soldiers, who were now quitting the ship in numbers, and making their way to the shore, though quite ignorant of its nature and description.

"Among other expedients, the ensign-staff had been unshipped, and attempted to be laid between the ship's side and some of the rocks, but without success, for it snapped asunder before it reached them. However, by the light of a lanthorn, which a seaman handed through the skylight of the round-house to the deck, Mr. Meriton discovered a spar which appeared to be laid from the ship's side to the rocks, and on this spar he resolved to attempt his escape.

"Accordingly, lying down upon it, he thrust himself forward; however, he soon found that it had no communication with the rock; he reached the end of it, and then slipped off, receiving a very violent bruise in his fall, and before he could recover his legs, he was washed off by the surge. He now supported himself by swimming, until a returning wave dashed him against the back part of the cavern. Here he laid hold of a small projection in the rock, but was so much benumbed that he was on the point of quitting it, when a seaman, who had already gained a footing, extended his hand, and assisted him until he could secure himself a little on the rock; from which he clambered on a shelf still higher, and out of the reach of the surf.

"Mr. Rogers, the third mate, remained with the captain

and the unfortunate ladies and their companions nearly twenty minutes after Mr. Meriton had quitted the ship. Soon after the latter left the round-house, the captain asked what was become of him, to which Mr. Rogers replied, that he was gone on deck to see what could be done. After this, a heavy sea breaking over the ship, the ladies exclaimed, 'Oh poor Meriton! he is drowned; had he stayed with us he would have been safe!' and they all, particularly Miss Mary Pierce, expressed great concern at the apprehension of his loss.

"The sea was now breaking in at the fore part of the ship, and reached as far as the mainmast. Captain Pierce gave Mr. Rogers a nod, and they took a lamp and went together into the stern-gallery, where, after viewing the rocks for some time, Captain Pierce asked Mr. Rogers if he thought there was any possibility of saving the girls; to which he replied, he feared there was none; for they could only discover the black face of the perpendicular rock, and not the cavern which afforded shelter to those who escaped. They then returned to the round-house, where Mr. Rogers hung up the lamp, and Captain Pierce sat down between his two daughters.

"The sea continuing to break in very fast, Mr. Macmanus, a midshipman, and Mr. Schutz, a passenger, asked Mr. Rogers what they could do to escape. 'Follow me,' he replied, and they all went into the stern-gallery, and from thence to the upper-quarter-gallery on the poop. While there, a very heavy sea fell on board, and the round-house gave way; Mr. Rogers heard the ladies shriek at intervals, as if the water reached them; the noise of the sea at other times drowning their voices.

"Mr. Brimer had followed him to the poop, where they remained together about five minutes, when on the breaking of this heavy sea, they jointly seized a hen-coop. The same wave which proved fatal to some of those below, carried him and his companion to the rock, on which they were violently dashed and miserably bruised.

"Here on the rock were twenty-seven men; but it now being low water, and as they were convinced that on the flowing of the tide all must be washed off, many attempted to get to the back or the sides of the cavern, beyond the reach of the returning sea. Scarcely more than six, besides Mr. Rogers and Mr. Brimer, succeeded.

"Mr. Rogers, on gaining this station, was so nearly exhausted, that had his exertions been protracted only a few minutes longer, he must have sunk under them. He was now prevented from joining Mr. Meriton, by at least twenty men between them, none of whom could move, without the imminent peril of his life.

"They found that a very considerable number of the crew, seamen and soldiers, and some petty officers, were in the same situation as themselves, though many who had reached the rocks below, perished in attempting to ascend. They could yet discern some part of the ship, and in their dreary station solaced themselves with the hopes of its remaining entire until day-break; for, in the midst of their own distress, the sufferings of the females on board affected them with most poignant anguish; and every sea that broke inspired them with terror for their safety.

"But, alas, their apprehensions were too soon realised! Within a very few minutes of the time that Mr. Rogers gained the rock, an universal shriek, which long vibrated in their ears, in which the voice of female distress was lamentably distinguished, announced the dreadful catastrophe. In a few moments all was hushed, except the roaring of the winds and the dashing of the waves; the wreck was buried in the deep, and not an atom of it was ever afterwards seen."

The most beautiful and affecting incident I know, associated with a shipwreck, succeeds this dismal story for a winter night. The Grosvenor, East Indiaman, homeward bound, goes ashore on the coast of Caffraria. It is resolved that the officers, passengers, and crew, in number one hundred and thirty-five souls, shall endeavour to penetrate on foot, across trackless deserts, infested by wild beasts and cruel savages, to the Dutch settlements at the Cape of Good Hope. With this forlorn object before them, they finally separate into two parties—never more to meet on earth.

There is a solitary child among the passengers—a little boy of seven years old who has no relation there; and when the first party is moving away he cries after some member of it who has been kind to him. The crying of a child might be supposed to be a little thing to men in such great extremity; but it touches them, and he is immediately taken into that detachment.

From which time forth, this child is sublimely made a sacred charge. He is pushed, on a little raft, across broad rivers by the swimming sailors; they carry him by turns through the deep sand and long grass (he patiently walking at all other times); they share with him such putrid fish as they find to eat; they lie down and wait for him when the rough carpenter, who becomes his especial friend, lags behind. Beset by lions and tigers, by savages, by thirst, by hunger, by death in a crowd of ghastly shapes, they never—O Father of all mankind, thy name be blessed for it!—forget this child. The captain stops exhausted, and his faithful coxswain goes back and is seen to sit down by his side, and neither of the two shall be any more beheld until the great last day; but, as the rest go on for their lives, they take the child with them. The carpenter dies of poisonous berries eaten in starvation; and the steward, succeeding to the command of the party, succeeds to the sacred guardianship of the child.

God knows all he does for the poor baby; how he cheerfully carries him in his arms when he himself is weak and ill; how he feeds him when he himself is griped with want; how he folds his ragged jacket round him, lays his little worn face with a woman's tenderness upon his sunburnt breast, soothes him in his sufferings, sings to him as he limps along, unmindful of his own parched and bleeding feet. Divided for a few days from the rest, they dig a grave in the sand and bury their good friend the cooper —these two companions alone in the wilderness—and then the time comes when they both are ill, and beg their wretched partners in despair, reduced and few in number now, to wait by them one day. They wait by them one day, they wait by them two days. On the morning of the third, they move very softly about, in making their preparations for the resumption of their journey; for, the child is sleeping by the fire, and it is agreed with one consent that he shall not be disturbed until the last moment. The moment comes, the fire is dying—and the child is dead.

His faithful friend, the steward, lingers but a little while behind him. His grief is great, he staggers on for a few days, lies down in the desert, and dies. But he shall be reunited in his immortal spirit—who can doubt it!—with the child, where he and the poor carpenter shall be raised

up with the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto Me."

As I recall the dispersal and disappearance of nearly all the participators in this once famous shipwreck (a mere handful being recovered at last), and the legends that were long afterwards revived from time to time among the English officers at the Cape, of a white woman with an infant, said to have been seen weeping outside a savage hut far in the interior, who was whisperingly associated with the remembrance of the missing ladies saved from the wrecked vessel, and who was often sought but never found, thoughts of another kind of travel came into my mind.

Thoughts of a voyager unexpectedly summoned from home, who travelled a vast distance, and could never return. Thoughts of this unhappy wayfarer in the depths of his sorrow, in the bitterness of his anguish, in the helplessness of his self-reproach, in the desperation of his desire to set right what he had left wrong, and do what he had left undone.

For there were many many things he had neglected. Little matters while he was at home and surrounded by them, but things of mighty moment when he was at an immeasurable distance. There were many many blessings that he had inadequately felt, there were many trivial injuries that he had not forgiven, there was love that he had but poorly returned, there was friendship that he had too lightly prized: there were a million kind words that he might have spoken, a million of kind looks that he might have given, uncountable slight easy deeds in which he might have been most truly great and good. O for a day (he would exclaim), for but one day to make amends! But the sun never shone upon that happy day, and out of his remote captivity he never came.

Why does this traveller's fate obscure, on New Year's Eve, the other histories of travellers with which my mind was filled but now, and cast a solemn shadow over me! Must I one day make his journey? Even so. Who shall say, that I may not then be tortured by such late regrets: that I may not then look from my exile on my empty place and undone work? I stand upon a seashore, where the waves are years. They break and fall, and I may little heed them; but, with every wave the sea is rising, and I know that it will float me on this traveller's voyage at last.

THE LATE MR. JUSTICE TALFOURD.

The readers of these pages will have known, many days before the present number can come into their hands, that on Monday the thirteenth of March, this upright judge and good man died suddenly at Stafford in the discharge of his duties. Mercifully spared protracted pain and mental decay, he passed away in a moment, with words of Christian eloquence, of brotherly tenderness and kindness towards all men, yet unfinished on his lips.

As he died he had always lived. So amiable a man, so gentle, so sweet-tempered, of such a noble simplicity, so perfectly unspoiled by his labours and their rewards, is very rare indeed upon this earth. These lines are traced by the faltering hand of a friend; but none can so fully know how true they are, as those who knew him under all circumstances, and found him ever the same.

In his public aspects; in his poems, in his speeches, on the bench, at the bar, in Parliament; he was widely appreciated, honoured, and beloved. Inseparable as his great and varied abilities were from himself in life, it is yet to himself and not to them, that affection in its first grief naturally turns. They remain, but he is lost.

The chief delight of his life was to give delight to others. His nature was so exquisitely kind, that to be kind was its highest happiness. Those who had the privilege of seeing him in his own home when his public successes were greatest,—so modest, so contented with little things, so interested in humble persons and humble efforts, so surrounded by children and young people, so adored in remembrance of a domestic generosity and greatness of heart too sacred to be unveiled here, can never forget the pleasure of that sight.

If ever there were a house, in England justly celebrated for the reverse of the picture, where every art was honoured for its own sake, and where every visitor was received for his own claims and merits, that house was his. It was in this respect a great example, as sorely needed as it will be sorely missed. Rendering all legitimate deference to rank and riches, there never was a man more com-

posedly, unaffectedly, quietly, immovable by such considerations than the subject of this sorrowing remembrance. On the other hand, nothing would have astonished him so much as the suggestion that he was anybody's patron or protector. His dignity was ever of that highest and purest sort which has no occasion to proclaim itself, and which is not in the least afraid of losing itself.

In the first joy of his appointment to the judicial bench, he made a summer-visit to the sea-shore, "to share his exultation in the gratification of his long-cherished ambition, with the friend,"—now among the many friends who mourn his death and lovingly recall his virtues. Lingering in the bright moonlight at the close of a happy day, he spoke of his new functions, of his sense of the great responsibility he undertook, and of his placid belief that the habits of his professional life rendered him equal to their efficient discharge; but, above all, he spoke, with an earnestness never more to be separated in his friend's mind from the murmur of the sea upon a moonlight night, of his reliance on the strength of his desire to do right before God and man. He spoke with his own singleness of heart, and his solitary hearer knew how deep and true his purpose was. They passed, before parting for the night, into a playful dispute at what age he should retire, and what he would do at three-score years and ten. And ah! within five short years, it is all ended like a dream.

But, by the strength of his desire to do right, he was animated to the last moment of his existence. Who, knowing England at this time, would wish to utter with his last breath a more righteous warning than that its curse is ignorance, or a miscalled education which is as bad or worse, and a want of the exchange of innumerable graces and sympathies among the various orders of society, each hardened unto each and holding itself aloof? Well will it be for us and for our children if those dying words be never henceforth forgotten on the Judgment Seat.

An example in his social intercourse to those who are born to station, an example equally to those who win it for themselves; teaching the one class to abate its stupid pride; the other, to stand upon its eminence, not forgetting the road by which it got there, and fawning upon no one; the conscientious judge, the charming writer and accomplished speaker, the gentle-hearted, guileless, affectionate man, has

entered on a brighter world. Very, very many have lost a friend; nothing in Creation has lost an enemy.

The hand that lays this poor flower on his grave, was a mere boy's when he first clasped it—newly come from the work in which he himself began life—little used to the plough it has followed since—obscure enough, with much to correct and learn. Each of its successive tasks through many intervening years has been cheered by his warmest interest, and the friendship then begun has ripened to maturity in the passage of time; but there was no more self-assertion or condescension in his winning goodness at first, than at last. The success of other men made as little change in him as his own.

OUR FRENCH WATERING PLACE.

HAVING earned, by many years of fidelity, the right to be sometimes inconstant to our English watering-place, we have dallied for two or three seasons with a French watering-place: once solely known to us as a town with a very long street, beginning with an abattoir and ending with a steam-boat, which it seemed our fate to behold only at daybreak on winter mornings, when (in the days before continental railroads), just sufficiently awake to know that we were most uncomfortably asleep, it was our destiny always to clatter through it, in the coupé of the diligence from Paris, with a sea of mud behind us, and a sea of tumbling waves before. In relation to which latter monster, our mind's eye now recalls a worthy Frenchman in a seal-skin cap with a braided hood over it, once our travelling companion in the coupé aforesaid, who, waking up with a pale and crumpled visage, and looking ruefully out at the grim row of breakers enjoying themselves fanatically on an instrument of torture called "the Bar," inquired of us whether we were ever sick at sea? Both to prepare his mind for the abject creature we were presently to become, and also to afford him consolation, we replied, "Sir, your servant is always sick when it is possible to be so." He returned, altogether uncheered by the bright example, "Ah, Heaven, but I am always sick, even when it is impossible to be so."

The means of communication between the French capital and our French watering-place are wholly changed since those days; but, the Channel remains unbridged as yet, and the old floundering and knocking about go on there. It must be confessed that saving in reasonable (and therefore rare) sea-weather, the act of arrival at our French watering-place from England is difficult to be achieved with dignity. Several little circumstances combine to render the visitor an object of humiliation. In the first place, the steamer no sooner touches the port, than all the passengers fall into captivity: being boarded by an overpowering force of Custom-house officers, and marched into a gloomy dungeon. In the second place, the road to this dungeon is fenced off with ropes breast-high, and outside those ropes all the English in the place who have lately been sea-sick and are now well, assemble in their best clothes to enjoy the degradation of their dilapidated fellow-creatures. "Oh, my gracious! how ill this one has been!" "Here's a damp one coming next!" "*Here's* a pale one!" "Oh! Ain't he green in the face, this next one!" Even we ourself (not deficient in natural dignity) have a lively remembrance of staggering up this detested lane one September day in a gale of wind, when we were received like an irresistible comic actor, with a burst of laughter and applause, occasioned by the extreme imbecility of our legs.

We were coming to the third place. In the third place, the captives, being shut up in the gloomy dungeon, are strained, two or three at a time, into an inner cell, to be examined as to passports; and across the doorway of communication, stands a military creature making a bar of his arm. Two ideas are generally present to the British mind during these ceremonies; first, that it is necessary to make for the cell with violent struggles, as if it were a life-boat and the dungeon a ship going down; secondly, that the military creature's arm is a national affront, which the government at home ought instantly to "take up." The British mind and body becoming heated by these fantasies, delirious answers are made to inquiries, and extravagant actions performed. Thus, Johnson persists in giving Johnson as his baptismal name, and substituting for his ancestral designation the national "Dam!" Neither can he by any means be brought to recognise the distinction between a portmanteau-key and a passport, but will obstinately per-

severe in tendering the one when asked for the other. This brings him to the fourth place, in a state of mere idiotcy; and when he is, in the fourth place, cast out at a little door into a howling wilderness of touters, he becomes a lunatic with wild eyes and floating hair until rescued and soothed. If friendless and unrescued, he is generally put into a railway omnibus and taken to Paris.

But, our French watering-place, when it is once got into, is a very enjoyable place. It has a varied and beautiful country around it, and many characteristic and agreeable things within it. To be sure, it might have fewer bad smells and less decaying refuse, and it might be better drained, and much cleaner in many parts, and therefore infinitely more healthy. Still, it is a bright, airy, pleasant, cheerful town; and if you were to walk down either of its three well-paved main streets, towards five o'clock in the afternoon, when delicate odours of cookery fill the air, and its hotel windows (it is full of hotels) give glimpses of long tables set out for dinner, and made to look sumptuous by the aid of napkins folded fan-wise, you would rightly judge it to be an uncommonly good town to eat and drink in.

We have an old walled town, rich in cool public wells of water, on the top of a hill within and above the present business-town; and if it were some hundreds of miles further from England, instead of being, on a clear day, within sight of the grass growing in the crevices of the chalk-cliffs of Dover, you would long ago have been bored to death about that town. It is more picturesque and quaint than half the innocent places which tourists, following their leader like sheep, have made impostors of. To say nothing of its houses with grave courtyards, its queer by-corners, and its many-windowed streets white and quiet in the sunlight, there is an ancient belfry in it that would have been in all the Annuals and Albums, going and gone, these hundred years, if it had but been more expensive to get at. Happily it has escaped so well, being only in our French watering-place, that you may like it of your own accord in a natural manner, without being required to go into convulsions about it. We regard it as one of the later blessings of our life, that BILKINS, the only authority on Taste, never took any notice that we can find out, of our French watering-place. Bilkins never wrote about it, never pointed

out anything to be seen in it, never measured anything in it, always left it alone. For which relief, Heaven bless the town and the memory of the immortal Bilkins likewise!

There is a charming walk, arched and shaded by trees, on the old walls that form the four sides of this High Town, whence you get glimpses of the streets below, and changing views of the other town and of the river, and of the hills and of the sea. It is made more agreeable and peculiar by some of the solemn houses that are rooted in the deep streets below, bursting into a fresher existence a-top, and having doors and windows, and even gardens, on these ramparts. A child going in at the courtyard gate of one of these houses, climbing up the many stairs, and coming out at the fourth-floor window, might conceive himself another Jack, alighting on enchanted ground from another bean-stalk. It is a place wonderfully populous in children; English children, with governesses reading novels as they walk down the shady lanes of trees, or nursemaids interchanging gossip on the seats; French children with their smiling bonnes in snow-white caps, and themselves—if little boys—in straw head-gear like bee-hives, work-baskets and church hassocks. Three years ago, there were three weazen old men, one bearing a frayed red ribbon in his threadbare button-hole, always to be found walking together among these children, before dinner-time. If they walked for an appetite, they doubtless lived en pension—were contracted for—otherwise their poverty would have made it a rash action. They were stooping, blear-eyed, dull old men, slip-shod and shabby, in long-skirted short-waisted coats and meagre trousers, and yet with a ghost of gentility hovering in their company. They spoke little to each other, and looked as if they might have been politically discontented if they had had vitality enough. Once, we overheard red-ribbon feebly complain to the other two that somebody, or something, was "a Robber;" and then they all three set their mouths so that they would have ground their teeth if they had had any. The ensuing winter gathered red-ribbon unto the great company of faded ribbons, and next year the remaining two were there—getting themselves entangled with hoops and dolls—familiar mysteries to the children—probably in the eyes of most of them, harmless creatures who had never been like children, and whom children could never be like. Another winter

came, and another old man went, and so, this present year, the last of the triumvirate, left off walking—it was no good, now—and sat by himself on a little solitary bench, with the hoops and the dolls as lively as ever all about him.

In the Place d'Armes of this town, a little decayed market is held, which seems to slip through the old gateway, like water, and go rippling down the hill, to mingle with the murmuring market in the lower town, and get lost in its movement and bustle. It is very agreeable on an idle summer morning to pursue this market-stream from the hill-top. It begins, dozingly and dully, with a few sacks of corn; starts into a surprising collection of boots and shoes; goes brawling down the hill in a diversified channel of old cordage, old iron, old crockery, old clothes, civil and military, old rags, new cotton goods, flaming prints of saints, little looking-glasses, and incalculable lengths of tape; dives into a backway, keeping out of sight for a little while, as streams will, or only sparkling for a moment in the shape of a market drinking-shop; and suddenly reappears behind the great church, shooting itself into a bright confusion of white-capped women and blue-bloused men, poultry, vegetables, fruits, flowers, pots, pans, praying-chairs, soldiers, country butter, umbrellas and other sun-shades, girl-porters waiting to be hired with baskets at their backs, and one weazen little old man in a cocked hat, wearing a cuirass of drinking-glasses and carrying on his shoulder a crimson temple fluttering with flags, like a glorified pavior's rammer without the handle, who rings a little bell in all parts of the scene, and cries his cooling drink Hola, Hola, Ho-o-o! in a shrill cracked voice that somehow makes itself heard, above all the chaffering and vending hum. Early in the afternoon, the whole course of the stream is dry. The praying-chairs are put back in the church, the umbrellas are folded up, the unsold goods are carried away, the stalls and stands disappear, the square is swept, the hackney coaches lounge there to be hired, and on all the country roads (if you walk about, as much as we do) you will see the peasant women, always neatly and comfortably dressed, riding home, with the pleasantest saddle-furniture of clean milk-pails, bright butter-kegs, and the like, on the jolliest little donkeys in the world.

We have another market in our French watering-place—that is to say, a few wooden hutches in the open street,

down by the Port—devoted to fish. Our fishing-boats are famous everywhere; and our fishing people, though they love lively colours and taste is neutral (see Bilkins), are among the most picturesque people we ever encountered. They have not only a quarter of their own in the town itself, but they occupy whole villages of their own on the neighbouring cliffs. Their churches and chapels are their own; they consort with one another, they intermarry among themselves, their customs are their own, and their costume is their own, and never changes. As soon as one of their boys can walk, he is provided with a long bright red nightcap; and one of their men would as soon think of going afloat without his head, as without that indispensable appendage to it. Then, they wear the noblest boots, with the hugest tops—flapping and bulging over anyhow; above which, they encase themselves in such wonderful overalls and petticoat trousers, made to all appearance of tarry old sails, so additionally stiffened with pitch and salt, that the wearers have a walk of their own, and go straddling and swinging about among the boats and barrels and nets and rigging, a sight to see. Then, their younger women, by dint of going down to the sea barefoot, to fling their baskets into the boats as they come in with the tide, and bespeak the first fruits of the haul with propitiatory promises to love and marry that dear fisherman who shall fill that basket like an Angel, have the finest legs ever carved by Nature in the brightest mahogany, and they walk like Juno. Their eyes, too, are so lustrous that their long gold ear-rings turn dull beside those brilliant neighbours; and when they are dressed, what with these beauties, and their fine fresh faces, and their many petticoats—striped petticoats, red petticoats, blue petticoats, always clean and smart, and never too long—and their home-made stockings, mulberry-coloured, blue, brown, purple, lilac—which the older women, taking care of the Dutch-looking children, sit in all sorts of places knitting, knitting, knitting from morning to night—and what with their little saucy bright blue jackets, knitted too, and fitting close to their handsome figures; and what with the natural grace with which they wear the commonest cap, or fold the commonest handkerchief round their luxuriant hair—we say, in a word and out of breath, that taking all these premises into our consideration, it has never been a matter of the least surprise

to us that we have never once met, in the cornfields, on the dusty roads, by the breezy windmills, on the plots of short sweet grass overhanging the sea—anywhere—a young fisherman and fisherwoman of our French watering-place together, but the arm of that fisherman has invariably been, as a matter of course and without any absurd attempt to disguise so plain a necessity, round the neck or waist of that fisherwoman. And we have had no doubt whatever, standing looking at their uphill streets, house rising above house, and terrace above terrace, and bright garments here and there lying sunning on rough stone parapets, that the pleasant mist on all such objects, caused by their being seen through the brown nets hung across on poles to dry, is, in the eyes of every true young fisherman, a mist of love and beauty, setting off the goddess of his heart.

Moreover it is to be observed that these are an industrious people, and a domestic people, and an honest people. And though we are aware that at the bidding of Bilkins it is our duty to fall down and worship the Neapolitans, we make bold very much to prefer the fishing people of our French watering-place—especially since our last visit to Naples within these twelvemonths, when we found only four conditions of men remaining in the whole city: to wit, lazzaroni, priests, spies, and soldiers, and all of them beggars; the paternal government having banished all its subjects except the rascals.

But we can never henceforth separate our French watering-place from our own landlord of two summers, M. Loyal Devasseur, citizen and town-councillor. Permit us to have the pleasure of presenting M. Loyal Devasseur.

His own family name is simply Loyal; but, as he is married, and as in that part of France a husband always adds to his own name the family name of his wife, he writes himself Loyal Devasseur. He owns a compact little estate of some twenty or thirty acres on a lofty hill-side, and on it he has built two country houses, which he lets furnished. They are by many degrees the best houses that are so let near our French watering-place; we have had the honour of living in both, and can testify. The entrance-hall of the first we inhabited was ornamented with a plan of the estate, representing it as about twice the size of Ireland; insomuch that when we were yet new to the property (M. Loyal always speaks of it as "La propriété") we

went three miles straight on end in search of the bridge of Austerlitz—which we afterwards found to be immediately outside the window. The Château of the Old Guard, in another part of the grounds, and, according to the plan, about two leagues from the little dining-room, we sought in vain for a week, until, happening one evening to sit upon a bench in the forest (forest in the plan), a few yards from the house-door, we observed at our feet, in the ignominious circumstances of being upside down and greenly rotten, the Old Guard himself: that is to say, the painted effigy of a member of that distinguished corps, seven feet high, and in the act of carrying arms, who had had the misfortune to be blown down in the previous winter. It will be perceived that M. Loyal is a staunch admirer of the great Napoleon. He is an old soldier himself—captain of the National Guard, with a handsome gold vase on his chimney-piece, presented to him by his company—and his respect for the memory of the illustrious general is enthusiastic. Medallions of him, portraits of him, busts of him, pictures of him, are thickly sprinkled all over the property. During the first month of our occupation, it was our affliction to be constantly knocking down Napoleon: if we touched a shelf in a dark corner, he toppled over with a crash; and every door we opened, shook him to the soul. Yet M. Loyal is not a man of mere castles in the air, or, as he would say, in Spain. He has a specially practical, contriving, clever, skilful eye and hand. His houses are delightful. He unites French elegance and English comfort, in a happy manner quite his own. He has an extraordinary genius for making tasteful little bedrooms in angles of his roofs, which an Englishman would as soon think of turning to any account as he would think of cultivating the Desert. We have ourself reposed deliciously in an elegant chamber of M. Loyal's construction, with our head as nearly in the kitchen chimney-pot as we can conceive it likely for the head of any gentleman, not by profession a Sweep, to be. And, into whatsoever strange nook M. Loyal's genius penetrates, it, in that nook, infallibly constructs a cupboard and a row of pegs. In either of our houses, we could have put away the knapsacks and hung up the hats of the whole regiment of Guides.

Aforetime, M. Loyal was a tradesman in the town. You can transact business with no present tradesman in the

town, and give your card "chez M. Loyal," but a brighter face shines upon you directly. We doubt if there is, ever was, or ever will be, a man so universally pleasant in the minds of people as M. Loyal is in the minds of the citizens of our French watering-place. They rub their hands and laugh when they speak of him. Ah, but he is such a good child, such a brave boy, such a generous spirit, that Monsieur Loyal! It is the honest truth. M. Loyal's nature is the nature of a gentleman. He cultivates his ground with his own hands (assisted by one little labourer, who falls into a fit now and then); and he digs and delves from morn to eve in prodigious perspirations—"works always," as he says—but, cover him with dust, mud, weeds, water, any stains you will, you never can cover the gentleman in M. Loyal. A portly, upright, broad-shouldered, brown-faced man, whose soldierly bearing gives him the appearance of being taller than he is, look into the bright eye of M. Loyal, standing before you in his working blouse and cap, not particularly well shaved, and, it may be, very earthy, and you shall discern in M. Loyal a gentleman whose true politeness is in grain, and confirmation of whose word by his bond you would blush to think of. Not without reason is M. Loyal when he tells that story, in his own vivacious way, of his travelling to Fulham, near London, to buy all these hundreds and hundreds of trees you now see upon the Property, then a bare, bleak hill; and of his sojourning in Fulham three months; and of his jovial evenings with the market-gardeners; and of the crowning banquet before his departure, when the market-gardeners rose as one man, clinked their glasses all together (as the custom at Fulham is), and cried, "Vive Loyal!"

M. Loyal has an agreeable wife, but no family; and he loves to drill the children of his tenants, or run races with them, or do anything with them, or for them, that is good-natured. He is of a highly convivial temperament, and his hospitality is unbounded. Billet a soldier on him, and he is delighted. Five-and-thirty soldiers had M. Loyal billeted on him this present summer, and they all got fat and red-faced in two days. It became a legend among the troops that whosoever got billeted on M. Loyal rolled in clover; and so it fell out that the fortunate man who drew the billet "M. Loyal Devasseur" always leaped into the air, though in heavy marching order. M. Loyal cannot

bear to admit anything that might seem by any implication to disparage the military profession. We hinted to him once, that we were conscious of a remote doubt arising in our mind, whether a sou a day for pocket-money, tobacco, stockings, drink, washing, and social pleasures in general, left a very large margin for a soldier's enjoyment. Pardon! said Monsieur Loyal, rather wincing. It was not a fortune, but—à la bonne heure—it was better than it used to be! What, we asked him on another occasion, were all those neighbouring peasants, each living with his family in one room, and each having a soldier (perhaps two) billeted on him every other night, required to provide for those soldiers? "Faith!" said M. Loyal, reluctantly; "a bed, monsieur, and fire to cook with, and a candle. And they share their supper with those soldiers. It is not possible that they could eat alone."—"And what allowance do they get for this?" said we. Monsieur Loyal drew himself up taller, took a step back, laid his hand upon his breast, and said, with majesty, as speaking for himself and all France, "Monsieur, it is a contribution to the State!"

It is never going to rain, according to M. Loyal. When it is impossible to deny that it is now raining in torrents, he says it will be fine—charming—magnificent—to-morrow. It is never hot on the Property, he contends. Likewise it is never cold. The flowers, he says, come out, delighted to grow there; it is like Paradise this morning; it is like the Garden of Eden. He is a little fanciful in his language: smilingly observing of Madame Loyal, when she is absent at vespers, that she is "gone to her salvation"—allée à son salut. He has a great enjoyment of tobacco, but nothing would induce him to continue smoking face to face with a lady. His short black pipe immediately goes into his breast pocket, scorches his blouse, and nearly sets him on fire. In the Town Council and on occasions of ceremony, he appears in a full suit of black, with a waistcoat of magnificent breadth across the chest, and a shirt-collar of fabulous proportions. Good, M. Loyal! Under blouse or waistcoat, he carries one of the gentlest hearts that beat in a nation teeming with gentle people. He has had losses, and has been at his best under them. Not only the loss of his way by night in the Fulham times—when a bad subject of an Englishman, under pretence of seeing him home, took him into all the night public-houses, drank "arfanarf" in

every one at his expense, and finally fled, leaving him shipwrecked at Cleefeeway, which we apprehend to be Ratcliffe Highway—but heavier losses than that. Long ago a family of children and a mother were left in one of his houses without money, a whole year. M. Loyal—anything but as rich as we wish he had been—had not the heart to say "you must go;" so they stayed on and stayed on, and paying-tenants who would have come in couldn't come in, and at last they managed to get helped home across the water; and M. Loyal kissed the whole group, and said, "Adieu, my poor infants!" and sat down in their deserted salon and smoked his pipe of peace.—"The rent, M. Loyal?" "Eh! well! The rent!" M. Loyal shakes his head. "Le bon Dieu," says M. Loyal presently, "will recompense me," and he laughs and smokes his pipe of peace. May he smoke it on the Property, and not be recompensed, these fifty years!

There are public amusements in our French watering-place, or it would not be French. They are very popular, and very cheap. The sea-bathing—which may rank as the most favoured daylight entertainment, inasmuch as the French visitors bathe all day long, and seldom appear to think of remaining less than an hour at a time in the water—is astoundingly cheap. Omnibuses convey you, if you please, from a convenient part of the town to the beach and back again; you have a clean and comfortable bathing-machine, dress, linen, and all appliances; and the charge for the whole is half-a-franc, or fivepence. On the pier, there is usually a guitar, which seems presumptuously enough to set its tinkling against the deep hoarseness of the sea, and there is always some boy or woman who sings, without any voice, little songs without any tune: the strain we have most frequently heard being an appeal to "the sportsman" not to bag that choicest of game, the swallow. For bathing purposes, we have also a subscription establishment with an esplanade, where people lounge about with telescopes, and seem to get a good deal of weariness for their money; and we have also an association of individual machine proprietors combined against this formidable rival. M. Féroce, our own particular friend in the bathing line, is one of these. How he ever came by his name we cannot imagine. He is as gentle and polite a man as M. Loyal Devasseur himself; immensely stout withal; and of a beaming aspect.

M. Féroce has saved so many people from drowning, and has been decorated with so many medals in consequence, that his stoutness seems a special dispensation of Providence to enable him to wear them; if his girth were the girth of an ordinary man, he could never hang them on, all at once. It is only on very great occasions that M. Féroce displays his shining honours. At other times they lie by, with rolls of manuscript testifying to the causes of their presentation, in a huge glass case in the red-sofa'd salon of his private residence on the beach, where M. Féroce also keeps his family pictures, his portraits of himself as he appears both in bathing life and in private life, his little boats that rock by clockwork, and his other ornamental possessions.

Then, we have a commodious and gay Theatre—or had, for it is burned down now—where the opera was always preceded by a vaudeville, in which (as usual) everybody, down to the little old man with the large hat and the little cane and tassel, who always played either my Uncle or my Papa, suddenly broke out of the dialogue into the mildest vocal snatches, to the great perplexity of unaccustomed strangers from Great Britain, who never could make out when they were singing and when they were talking—and indeed it was pretty much the same. But, the caterers in the way of entertainment to whom we are most beholden, are the Society of Welldoing, who are active all the summer, and give the proceeds of their good works to the poor. Some of the most agreeable fêtes they contrive, are announced as "Dedicated to the children;" and the taste with which they turn a small public enclosure into an elegant garden beautifully illuminated; and the thorough-going heartiness and energy with which they personally direct the childish pleasures; are supremely delightful. For fivepence a head, we have on these occasions donkey races with English "Jokeis," and other rustic sports; lotteries for toys; roundabouts, dancing on the grass to the music of an admirable band, fire-balloons and fireworks. Further, almost every week all through the summer—never mind, now, on what day of the week—there is a fête in some adjoining village (called in that part of the country a Ducasse), where the people—really *the people*—dance on the green turf in the open air, round a little orchestra, that seems itself to dance, there is such an airy motion of flags

and streamers all about it. And we do not suppose that between the Torrid Zone and the North Pole there are to be found male dancers with such astonishingly loose legs, furnished with so many joints in wrong places, utterly unknown to Professor Owen, as those who here disport themselves. Sometimes, the fête appertains to a particular trade; you will see among the cheerful young women at the joint Ducasse of the milliners and tailors, a wholesome knowledge of the art of making common and cheap things uncommon and pretty, by good sense and good taste, that is a practical lesson to any rank of society in a whole island we could mention. The oddest feature of these agreeable scenes is the everlasting Roundabout (we preserve an English word wherever we can, as we are writing the English language), on the wooden horses of which machine grown-up people of all ages are wound round and round with the utmost solemnity, while the proprietor's wife grinds an organ, capable of only one tune, in the centre.

As to the boarding-houses of our French watering-place, they are Legion, and would require a distinct treatise. It is not without a sentiment of national pride that we believe them to contain more bores from the shores of Albion than all the clubs in London. As you walk timidly in their neighbourhood, the very neck-clothes and hats of your elderly compatriots cry to you from the stones of the streets, "We are Bores—avoid us!" We have never overheard at street corners such lunatic scraps of political and social discussion as among these dear countrymen of ours. They believe everything that is impossible and nothing that is true. They carry rumours, and ask questions, and make corrections and improvements on one another, staggering to the human intellect. And they are for ever rushing into the English library, propounding such incomprehensible paradoxes to the fair mistress of that establishment, that we beg to recommend her to her Majesty's gracious consideration as a fit object for a pension.

The English form a considerable part of the population of our French watering-place, and are deservedly addressed and respected in many ways. Some of the surface-addresses to them are odd enough, as when a laundress puts a placard outside her house announcing her possession of that curious British instrument, a "Mingle;" or when a tavern-keeper provides accommodation for the celebrated

English game of "Nokemdon." But, to us, it is not the least pleasant feature of our French watering-place that a long and constant fusion of the two great nations there, has taught each to like the other, and to learn from the other, and to rise superior to the absurd prejudices that have lingered among the weak and ignorant in both countries equally.

Drumming and trumpeting of course go on for ever in our French watering-place. Flag-flying is at a premium, too; but, we cheerfully avow that we consider a flag a very pretty object, and that we take such outward signs of innocent liveliness to our heart of hearts. The people, in the town and in the country, are a busy people who work hard; they are sober, temperate, good-humoured, light-hearted, and generally remarkable for their engaging manners. Few just men, not immoderately bilious, could see them in their recreations without very much respecting the character that is so easily, so harmlessly, and so simply, pleased.

PRINCE BULL. A FAIRY TALE.

Once upon a time, and of course it was in the Golden Age, and I hope you may know when that was, for I am sure I don't, though I have tried hard to find out, there lived in a rich and fertile country, a powerful Prince whose name was Bull. He had gone through a great deal of fighting, in his time, about all sorts of things, including nothing; but, had gradually settled down to be a steady, peaceable, good-natured, corpulent, rather sleepy Prince.

This Puissant Prince was married to a lovely Princess whose name was Fair Freedom. She had brought him a large fortune, and had borne him an immense number of children, and had set them to spinning, and farming, and engineering, and soldiering, and sailoring, and doctoring, and lawyering, and preaching, and all kinds of trades. The coffers of Prince Bull were full of treasure, his cellars were crammed with delicious wines from all parts of the world, the richest gold and silver plate that ever was seen adorned his sideboards, his sons were strong, his daughters were handsome, and in short you might have supposed that

if there ever lived upon earth a fortunate and happy Prince, the name of that Prince, take him for all in all, was assuredly Prince Bull.

But, appearances, as we all know, are not always to be trusted—far from it; and if they had led you to this conclusion respecting Prince Bull, they would have led you wrong as they often have led me.

For, this good Prince had two sharp thorns in his pillow, two hard knobs in his crown, two heavy loads on his mind, two unbridled nightmares in his sleep, two rocks ahead in his course. He could not by any means get servants to suit him, and he had a tyrannical old godmother, whose name was Tape.

She was a Fairy, this Tape, and was a bright red all over. She was disgustingly prim and formal, and could never bend herself a hair's breadth this way or that way, out of her naturally crooked shape. But, she was very potent in her wicked art. She could stop the fastest thing in the world, change the strongest thing into the weakest, and the most useful into the most useless. To do this she had only to put her cold hand upon it, and repeat her own name, Tape. Then it withered away.

At the court of Prince Bull—at least I don't mean literally at his court, because he was a very genteel Prince, and readily yielded to his godmother when she always reserved that for his hereditary Lords and Ladies—in the dominions of Prince Bull, among the great mass of the community who were called in the language of that polite country the Mobs and the Snobs, were a number of very ingenious men, who were always busy with some invention or other, for promoting the prosperity of the Prince's subjects, and augmenting the Prince's power. But, whenever they submitted their models for the Prince's approval, his godmother stepped forward, laid her hand upon them, and said "Tape." Hence it came to pass, that when any particularly good discovery was made, the discoverer usually carried it off to some other Prince, in foreign parts, who had no old godmother who said Tape. This was not on the whole an advantageous state of things for Prince Bull, to the best of my understanding.

The worst of it was, that Prince Bull had in course of years lapsed into such a state of subjection to this unlucky godmother, that he never made any serious effort to rid

himself of her tyranny. I have said this was the worst of it, but there I was wrong, because there is a worse consequence still, behind. The Prince's numerous family became so downright sick and tired of Tape, that when they should have helped the Prince out of the difficulties into which that evil creature led him, they fell into a dangerous habit of moodily keeping away from him in an impassive and indifferent manner, as though they had quite forgotten that no harm could happen to the Prince their father, without its inevitably affecting themselves.

Such was the aspect of affairs at the court of Prince Bull, when this great Prince found it necessary to go to war with Prince Bear. He had been for some time very doubtful of his servants, who, besides being indolent and addicted to enriching their families at his expense, domineered over him dreadfully; threatening to discharge themselves if they were found the least fault with, pretending that they had done a wonderful amount of work when they had done nothing, making the most unmeaning speeches that ever were heard in the Prince's name, and uniformly showing themselves to be very inefficient indeed. Though, that some of them had excellent characters from previous situations is not to be denied. Well; Prince Bull called his servants together, and said to them one and all, "Send out my army against Prince Bear. Clothe it, arm it, feed it, provide it with all necessaries and contingencies, and I will pay the piper! Do your duty by my brave troops," said the Prince, "and do it well, and I will pour my treasure out like water, to defray the cost. Who ever heard ME complain of money well laid out!" Which indeed he had reason for saying, inasmuch as he was well known to be a truly generous and munificent Prince.

When the servants heard those words, they sent out the army against Prince Bear, and they set the army tailors to work, and the army provision merchants, and the makers of guns both great and small, and the gunpowder makers, and the makers of ball, shell, and shot; and they bought up all manner of stores and ships, without troubling their heads about the price, and appeared to be so busy that the good Prince rubbed his hands, and (using a favourite expression of his), said, "It's all right!" But, while they were thus employed, the Prince's godmother, who was a great favourite with those servants, looked in upon them

continually all day long, and whenever she popped in her head at the door said, "How do you do, my children? What are you doing here?" "Official business, godmother." "Oho!" says this wicked Fairy. "—Tape!" And then the business all went wrong, whatever it was, the servants' heads became so addled and muddled that they thought they were doing wonders.

Now, this was very bad conduct on the part of the vicious old nuisance, and she ought to have been strangled, even if she had stopped here; but, she didn't stop here, as you shall learn. For, a number of the Prince's subjects, being very fond of the Prince's army who were the bravest of men, assembled together and provided all manner of eatables and drinkables, and books to read, and clothes to wear, and tobacco to smoke, and candles to burn, and nailed them up in great packing-cases, and put them aboard a great many ships, to be carried out to that brave army in the cold and inclement country where they were fighting Prince Bear. Then, up comes this wicked Fairy as the ships were weighing anchor, and says, "How do you do, my children? What are you doing here?"—"We are going with all these comforts to the army, godmother."—"Oho!" says she. "A pleasant voyage, my darlings.—Tape!" And from that time forth, those enchanted ships went sailing, against wind and tide and rhyme and reason, round and round the world, and whenever they touched at any port were ordered off immediately, and could never deliver their cargoes anywhere.

This, again, was very bad conduct on the part of the vicious old nuisance, and she ought to have been strangled for it if she had done nothing worse; but, she did something worse still, as you shall learn. For, she got astride of an official broomstick, and muttered as a spell these two sentences, "On Her Majesty's service," and "I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant," and presently alighted in the cold and inclement country where the army of Prince Bull were encamped to fight the army of Prince Bear. On the sea-shore of that country, she found piled together, a number of houses for the army to live in, and a quantity of provisions for the army to live upon, and a quantity of clothes for the army to wear: while, sitting in the mud gazing at them, were a group of officers as red to look at as the wicked old woman herself. So, she said

to one of them, "Who are you, my darling, and how do you do?"—"I am the Quarter-master General's Department, godmother, and I am pretty well." Then she said to another, "Who are *you*, my darling, and how do *you* do?"—"I am the Commissariat Department, godmother, and *I* am pretty well." Then she said to another, "Who are *you*, my darling, and how do *you* do?"—"I am the Head of the Medical Department, godmother, and I am pretty well." Then, she said to some gentlemen scented with lavender, who kept themselves at a great distance from the rest, "And who are *you*, my pretty pets, and how do *you* do?" And they answered, "We-aw-are-the-aw-Staff-aw-Department, godmother, and we are very well indeed." —"I am delighted to see you all, my beauties," says this wicked old Fairy, "—Tape!" Upon that, the house, clothes, and provisions, all mouldered away; and the soldiers who were sound, fell sick; and the soldiers who were sick, died miserably: and the noble army of Prince Bull perished.

When the dismal news of his great loss was carried to the Prince, he suspected his godmother very much indeed; but, he knew that his servants must have kept company with the malicious beldame, and must have given way to her, and therefore he resolved to turn those servants out of their places. So, he called to him a Roebuck who had the gift of speech, and he said, "Good Roebuck, tell them they must go." So, the good Roebuck delivered his message, so like a man that you might have supposed him to be nothing but a man, and they were turned out—but, not without warning, for that they had had a long time.

And now comes the most extraordinary part of the history of this Prince. When he had turned out those servants, of course he wanted others. What was his astonishment to find that in all his dominions, which contained no less than twenty-seven millions of people, there were not above five-and-twenty servants altogether! They were so lofty about it, too, that instead of discussing whether they should hire themselves as servants to Prince Bull, they turned things topsy-turvy, and considered whether as a favour they should hire Prince Bull to be their master! While they were arguing this point among themselves quite at their leisure, the wicked old red Fairy was incessantly going up and down, knocking at the doors of twelve of the oldest of the five-and-twenty, who were the oldest inhab-

itants in all that country, and whose united ages amounted to one thousand, saying, "Will *you* hire Prince Bull for your master?—Will *you* hire Prince Bull for your master?" To which one answered, "I will if next door will;" and another, "I won't if over the way does;" and another, "I can't if he, she, or they, might, could, would, or should." And all this time Prince Bull's affairs were going to rack and ruin.

At last, Prince Bull in the height of his perplexity assumed a thoughtful face, as if he were struck by an entirely new idea. The wicked old Fairy, seeing this, was at his elbow directly, and said, "How do you do, my Prince, and what are you thinking of?"—"I am thinking, godmother," says he, "that among all the seven-and-twenty millions of my subjects who have never been in service, there are men of intellect and business who have made me very famous both among my friends and enemies."—"Aye, truly?" says the Fairy.—"Aye, truly," says the Prince.—"And what then?" says the Fairy.—"Why, then," says he, "since the regular old class of servants do so ill, are so hard to get, and carry it with so high a hand, perhaps I might try to make good servants of some of these." The words had no sooner passed his lips than she returned, chuckling, "You think so, do you? Indeed, my Prince? —Tape!" Thereupon he directly forgot what he was thinking of, and cried out lamentably to the old servants, "O, do come and hire your poor old master! Pray do! On any terms!"

And this, for the present, finishes the story of Prince Bull. I wish I could wind it up by saying that he lived happy ever afterwards, but I cannot in my conscience do so; for, with Tape at his elbow, and his estranged children fatally repelled by her from coming near him, I do not, to tell you the plain truth, believe in the possibility of such an end to it.

*THE THOUSAND AND ONE HUMBUGS.

EVERYBODY is acquainted with that enchanting collection of stories, the Thousand and One Nights, better known in England as the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. Most people know that these wonderful fancies are unquestionably of genuine Eastern origin, and are to be found in Arabic manuscripts now existing in the Vatican, in Paris, in London, and in Oxford; the last-named city being particularly distinguished in this connection, as possessing, in the library of Christchurch, a manuscript of the never-to-be-forgotten voyages of Sinbad the Sailor.

The civilised world is indebted to France for a vast amount of its possessions, and among the rest for the first opening to Europe of this gorgeous storehouse of Eastern riches. So well did M. GALLAND, the original translator, perform his task, that when Mr. WORTLEY MONTAGUE brought home the manuscript now in the Bodleian Library, there was found (poetical quotations excepted), to be very little, and that of a very inferior kind, to add to what M. Galland had already made perfectly familiar to France and England.

Thus much as to the Thousand and One Nights, we recall, by way of introduction to the discovery we are about to announce.

There has lately fallen into our hands, a manuscript in the Arabic character (with which we are perfectly acquainted), containing a variety of stories extremely similar in structure and incident to the Thousand and One Nights; but presenting the strange feature that although they are evidently of ancient origin, they have a curious accidental bearing on the present time. Allowing for the difference of manners and customs, it would often seem—were it not for the manifest impossibility of such prophetic knowledge in any mere man or men—that they were written expressly with an eye to events of the current age. We have referred the manuscript (which may be seen at our office on the first day of April in every year, at precisely four o'clock in the morning), to the profoundest Oriental Scholars of England and France, who are no less sensible than

we are ourselves of this remarkable coincidence, and are equally at a loss to account for it. They are agreed, we may observe, on the propriety of our rendering the title in the words, The Thousand and One Humbugs. For, although the Eastern story-tellers do not appear to have possessed any word, or combination of parts of words, precisely answering to the modern English Humbug (which, indeed, they expressed by the figurative phrase, A Camel made of sand), there is no doubt that they were conversant with so common a thing, and further that the thing was expressly meant to be designated in the general title of the Arabic manuscript now before us. Dispensing with further explanation, we at once commence the specimens we shall occasionally present, of this literary curiosity.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Among the ancient Kings of Persia who extended their glorious conquests into the Indies, and far beyond the famous River Ganges, even to the limits of China, TAXED-TAURUS (or Fleeced Bull) was incomparably the most renowned. He was so rich that he scorned to undertake the humblest enterprise without inaugurating it by ordering his Treasurers to throw several millions of pieces of gold into the dirt. For the same reason he attached no value to his foreign possessions, but merely used them as playthings for a little while, and then always threw them away or lost them.

This wise Sultan, though blessed with innumerable sources of happiness, was afflicted with one fruitful cause of discontent. He had been married many scores of times, yet had never found a wife to suit him. Although he had raised to the dignity of Howsa Kummauns[1] (or Peerless Chatterer), a great variety of beautiful creatures, not only of the lineage of the high nobles of his court, but also selected from other classes of his subjects, the result had uniformly been the same. They proved unfaithful, brazen, talkative, idle, extravagant, inefficient, and boastful. Thus it naturally happened that a Howsa Kummauns very rarely died a natural death, but was generally cut short in some violent manner.

At length, the young and lovely Reefawm (that is to

[1] Sounded like House o' Commons.

say, Light of Reason), the youngest and fairest of all the Sultan's wives, and to whom he had looked with hope to recompense him for his many disappointments, made as bad a Howsa Kummauns as any of the rest. The unfortunate Taxedtaurus took this so much to heart that he fell into a profound melancholy, secluded himself from observation, and for some time was so seldom seen or heard of that many of his great officers of state supposed him to be dead.

Shall I never, said the unhappy monarch, beating his breast in his retirement in the Pavilion of Failure, and giving vent to his tears, find a Howsa Kummauns who will be true to me! He then quoted from the Poet, certain verses importing, Every Howsa Kummauns has deceived me, Every Howsa Kummauns is a Humbug, I must slay the present Howsa Kummauns as I have slain so many others, I am brought to shame and mortification, I am despised by the world. After which his grief so overpowered him, that he fainted away.

It happened that on recovering his senses he heard the voice of the last-made Howsa Kummauns, in the Divan adjoining. Applying his ear to the lattice, and finding that that shameless Princess was vaunting her loyalty and virtue, and denying a host of facts—which she always did, all night—the Sultan drew his scimitar in a fury, resolved to put an end to her existence.

But, the Grand Vizier Parmarstoon (or Twirling Weathercock), who was at that moment watching his incensed master from behind the silken curtains of the Pavilion of Failure, hurried forward and prostrated himself, trembling, on the ground. This Vizier had newly succeeded to Abaddeen (or the Addled), who had for his misdeeds been strangled with a garter.

The breath of the slave, said the Vizier, is in the hands of his Lord, but the Lion will sometimes deign to listen to the croaking of the frog. I swear to thee, Vizier, replied the Sultan, that I have borne too much already and will bear no more. Thou and the Howsa Kummauns are in one story, and by the might of Allah and the beard of the Prophet, I have a mind to destroy ye both.

When the Vizier heard the Sultan thus menace him with destruction, his heart drooped within him. But, being a brisk and busy man, though stricken in years, he quoted certain lines from the Poet, implying that the thunder-

cloud often spares the leaf or there would be no fruit, and touched the ground with his forehead in token of submission. What wouldst thou say? demanded the generous prince. I give thee leave to speak. Thou art not unaccustomed to public speaking, speak glibly! Sire, returned the Vizier, but for the dread of the might of my Lord, I would reply in the words addressed by the ignorant man to the Genie. And what were those words? demanded the Sultan. Repeat them! Parmarstoon replied, To hear is to obey:

THE STORY OF THE IGNORANT MAN AND THE GENIE.

Sire, on the barbarous confines of the kingdom of the Tartars, there dwelt an ignorant man, who was obliged to make a journey through the great desert of Desolation; which, as your Majesty knows, is sometimes a journey of upwards of three score and ten years. He bade adieu to his mother very early in the morning, and departed without a guide, ragged, barefoot, and alone. He found the way surprisingly steep and rugged, and beset by vile serpents and strange unintelligible creatures of horrible shapes. It was likewise full of black bogs and pits, into which he not only fell himself, but often had the misfortune to drag other travellers whom he encountered, and who got out no more, but were miserably stifled.

Sire, on the fourteenth day of the journey of the ignorant man of the kingdom of the Tartars, he sat down to rest by the side of a foul well (being unable to find a better), and there cracked for a repast, as he best could, a very hard nut, which was all he had about him. He threw the shell anywhere as he stripped it off, and having made an end of his meal arose to wander on again, when sudddénly the air was darkened, he heard a frightful cry, and saw a monstrous Genie, of gigantic stature, who brandished a mighty scimitar in a hand of iron, advancing towards him. Rise, ignorant beast, said the monster, as he drew nigh, that I, Law, may kill thee for having affronted my ward. Alas, my lord, returned the ignorant man, how can I have affronted thy ward whom I never saw? He is invisible to thee, returned the Genie, because thou art a benighted barbarian; but if thou hadst ever learnt any good thing thou wouldst have seen him plainly, and wouldst have respected

him. Lord of my life, pleaded the traveller, how could I learn where there are none to teach me, and how affront thy ward whom I have not the power to see? I tell thee, returned the Genie, that with thy pernicious refuse thou hast struck my ward, Prince Socieetee, in the apple of the eye; and because thou hast done this, I will be thy ruin. I maim and kill the like of thee by thousands every year, for no other crime. And shall I spare *thee?* Kneel and receive the blow.

Your Majesty will believe (continued the Grand Vizier) that the ignorant man of the kingdom of the Tartars, gave himself up for lost when he heard those cruel words. Without so much as repeating the formula of our faith—There is but one Allah, from him we come, to him we must return, and who shall resist his will (for he was too ignorant even to have heard it), he bent his neck to receive the fatal stroke. His head rolled off as he finished saying these words: Dread Law, if thou hadst taken half the pains to teach me to discern thy ward that thou hast taken to avenge him, thou hadst been spared the great account to which I summon thee!

Taxedtaurus the Sultan of Persia listened attentively to this recital on the part of his Grand Vizier, and when it was concluded said with a threatening brow: Expound to me, O nephew of a dog, the points of resemblance between the Tiger and the Nightingale, and what thy ignorant man of the accursed kingdom of the Tartars has to do with the false Howsa Kummauns and the glib Vizier Parmarstoon? While speaking he again raised his glittering scimitar. Let not my master sully the sole of his foot by crushing an insect, returned the Vizier, kissing the ground seven times. I meant but to offer up a petition from the dust, that the Light of the eyes of the Faithful would, before striking, deign to hear my daughter. What of thy daughter? said the Sultan impatiently, and why should I hear thy daughter any more than the daughter of the dirtiest of the dustmen? Sire, returned the Vizier, I am dirtier than the dirtiest of the dustmen in your Majesty's sight, but my daughter is deeply read in the history of every Howsa Kummauns who has aspired to your Majesty's favour during many years, and if your Majesty would condescend to hear some of the Legends she has to relate, they might—What dost

thou call thy daughter? demanded the Sultan, interrupting. Hansardadade, replied the Vizier. Go, said the Sultan, bring her hither, I spare thy life until thou shalt return. The Grand Vizier Parmarstoon, on receiving the injunction to bring his daughter Hansardadade into the royal presence, lost no time in repairing to his palace, which was but across the Sultan's gardens, and going straight to the women's apartments, found Hansardadade surrounded by a number of old women who were all consulting her at once. In truth, this affable Princess was perpetually being referred to, by all manner of old women. Hastily causing her attendants, when she heard her father's errand, to attire her in her finest dress, which outsparkled the sun; and bidding her young sister, Brothartoon (or Chamber Candlestick), to make similar preparations and accompany her; the daughter of the Grand Vizier soon covered herself with a rich veil, and said to her father, with a low obeisance, Sir, I am ready to attend you, to my Lord, the Commander of the Faithful.

The Grand Vizier, and his daughter, Hansardadade, and her young sister Brothartoon, preceded by Mistaspeeka, a black mute, the Chief of the officers of the royal Seraglio, went across the Sultan's gardens by the way the Vizier had come, and arriving at the Sultan's palace, found that monarch on his throne surrounded by his principal counsellors and officers of state. They all four prostrated themselves at a distance, and waited the Sultan's pleasure. That gracious Prince was troubled in his mind when he commanded the fair Hansardadade (who, on the whole, was very fair indeed), to approach, for he had sworn an oath in the Vizier's absence from which he could not depart. Nevertheless, as it must be kept, he proceeded to announce it before the assembly. Vizier, said he, thou hast brought thy daughter here, as possessing a large stock of Howsa Kummauns experience, in the hope of her relating something that may soften me under my accumulated wrongs. Know that I have solemnly sworn that if her stories fail—as I believe they will—to mitigate my wrath, I will have her burned and her ashes cast to the winds. Also, I will strangle thee and the present Howsa Kummauns, and will take a new one every day and strangle her as soon as taken, until I find a good and true one. Parmarstoon replied, To hear is to obey.

Hansardadade then took a one-stringed lute, and sang a lengthened song in prose. Its purport was, I am the recorder of brilliant eloquence, I am the chronicler of patriotism, I am the pride of sages, and the joy of nations. The continued salvation of the country is owing to what I preserve, and without it there would be no business done. Sweet are the voices of the crow and chough, and Persia never never never can have words enough. At the conclusion of this delightful strain, the Sultan and the whole Divan were so faint with rapture that they remained in a comatose state for seven hours.

Would your Majesty, said Hansardadade, when all were at length recovered, prefer first to hear the story of the Wonderful Camp, or the story of the Talkative Barber, or the story of Scarli Tapa and the Forty Thieves? I would have thee commence, replied the Sultan, with the story of the Forty Thieves.

Hansardadade began, Sire, there was once a poor relation—when Brothartoon interposed. Dear sister, cried Brothartoon, it is now past midnight, it will be shortly daybreak, and if you are not asleep, you ought to be. I pray you, dear sister, by all means to hold your tongue to-night, and if my Lord the Sultan will suffer you to live another day, you can talk to-morrow. The Sultan arose with a clouded face, but went out without giving any orders for the execution.

THE STORY OF SCARLI TAPA AND THE FORTY THIEVES.

Accompanied by the Grand Vizier Parmarstoon, and the black mute Mistaspeeka the Chief of the Seraglio, Hansardadade again repaired next day to the august presence, and, after making the usual prostrations before the Sultan, began thus:

Sire, there was once a poor relation who lived in a town in the dominions of the Sultan of the Indies, and whose name was Scarli Tapa. He was the youngest son of a Dowajah—which, as your Majesty knows, is a female spirit of voracious appetite, and generally with a wig and a carmine complexion, who prowls about old houses and preys upon mankind. The Dowajah had attained an immense age, in consequence of having been put by an evil Genie on the

PENSHUNLIST, or talisman to secure long life; but, at length she very reluctantly died towards the close of a quarter, after making the most affecting struggles to live into the half-year.

Scarli Tapa had a rich elder brother named Cashim, who had married the daughter of a prosperous merchant, and lived magnificently. Scarli Tapa, on the other hand, could barely support his wife and family by lounging about the town and going out to dinner with his utmost powers of perseverance, betting on horse-races, playing at billiards, and running into debt with everybody who would trust him —the last being his principal means of obtaining an honest livelihood.

One day, when Scarli Tapa had strolled for some time along the banks of a great river of liquid filth which ornamented that agreeable country and rendered it salubrious, he found himself in the neighbourhood of the Woods and Forests. Lifting up his eyes, he observed in the distance a great cloud of dust. He was not surprised to see it, knowing those parts to be famous for casting prodigious quantities of dust into the eyes of the Faithful; but, as it rapidly advanced towards him, he climbed into a tree, the better to observe it without being seen himself.

As the cloud of dust approached, Scarli Tapa perceived it from his hiding-place to be occasioned by forty mounted robbers, each bestriding a severely goaded and heavily laden Bull. The whole troop came to a halt at the foot of the tree, and all the robbers dismounted. Every robber then tethered his hack to the most convenient shrub, gave it a full meal of very bad chaff, and hung over his arm the empty sack which had contained the same. Then the Captain of the Robbers, advancing to a door in an antediluvian rock, which Scarli Tapa had not observed before, and on which were the enchanted letters O. F. F. I. C. E., said, Debrett's Peerage. Open Sesame! As soon as the Captain of the Robbers had uttered these words, the door, obedient to the charm, flew open, and all the robbers went in. The Captain went in last, and the door shut of itself.

The robbers stayed so long within the rock that Scarli Tapa more than once felt tempted to descend the tree and make off. Fearful, however, that they might reappear and catch him before he could escape, he remained hidden by

the leaves, as patiently as he could. At last the door opened, and the forty robbers came out. As the Captain had gone in last, he came out first, and stood to see the whole troop pass him. When they had all done so, he said, Debrett's Peerage. Shut Sesame! The door immediately closed again as before. Every robber then mounted his Bull, adjusting before him his sack well filled with gold, silver and jewels. When the Captain saw that they were all ready, he put himself at their head, and they rode off by the way they had come.

Scarli Tapa remained in the tree until the receding cloud of dust occasioned by the troop of robbers with their Captain at their head, was no longer visible, and then came softly down and approached the door. Making use of the words that he had heard pronounced by the Captain of the Robbers, he said, after first piously strengthening himself with the remembrance of his deceased mother the Dowajah, Debrett's Peerage. Open Sesame! The door instantly flew wide open.

Scarli Tapa, who had expected to see a dull place, was surprised to find himself in an exceedingly agreeable vista of rooms, where everything was as light as possible, and where vast quatities of the finest wheaten loaves, and the richest gold and silver fishes, and all kinds of valuable possessions were to be got for the laying hold of. Quickly loading himself with as much spoil as he could move under, he opened and closed the door as the Captain of the Robbers had done, and hurried away with his treasure to his poor home.

When the wife of Scarli Tapa saw her husband enter their dwelling after it was dark, and proceed to pile upon the floor a heap of wealth, she cried, Alas! husband, whom have you taken in, now? Be not alarmed, wife, returned Scarli Tapa, no one suffers but the public. And then told her how he, a poor relation, had made his way into Office by the magic words and had enriched himself.

There being more money and more loaves and fishes than they knew what to do with at the moment, the wife of Scarli Tapa, transported with joy, ran off to her sister-in-law, the wife of Cashim Tapa, who lived hard by, to borrow a measure by means of which their property could be got into some order. The wife of Cashim Tapa looking into the measure when it was brought back, found at the

bottom of it several of the crumbs of fine loaves and of the scales of gold and silver fishes; upon which, flying into an envious rage, she thus addressed her husband: Wretched Cashim, you know you are of high birth as the eldest son of a Dowajah, and you think you are rich, but your despised younger brother, Scarli Tapa, is infinitely richer and more powerful than you. Judge of his wealth from these tokens. At the same time she showed him the measure.

Cashim, who, since his marriage to the merchant's widow, had treated his brother coolly and held him at a distance, was at once fired with a burning desire to know how he had become rich. He was unable to sleep all night, and at the first streak of day, before the summons to morning prayers was heard from the minarets of the mosques, arose and went to his brother's house. Dear Scarli Tapa, said he, pretending to be very fraternal, what loaves and fishes are these that thou hast in thy possession? Scarli Tapa perceiving from this discourse that he could no longer keep his secret, communicated his discovery to his brother, who lost no time in providing all things necessary for the stowage of riches, and in repairing alone to the mysterious door near the Woods and Forests.

When night came and Cashim Tapa did not return, his relatives became uneasy. His absence being prolonged for several days and nights, Scarli Tapa at length proceeded to the enchanted door in search of him. Opening it by the infallible means, what were his emotions to find that the robbers had encountered his brother within, and had quartered him upon the spot for ever.

Commander of the Faithful, when Scarli Tapa beheld the dismal spectacle of his brother everlastingly quartered upon Office for having merely uttered the magic words, Debrett's Peerage. Open Sesame! he was greatly troubled in his mind. Feeling the necessity of hushing the matter up, and putting the best face upon it for the family credit, he at once devised a plan to attain that object.

There was in the House where his brother had sat himself down on his marriage with the merchant's daughter, a discreet slave whose name was Jobbiana. Though a kind of under secretary in the treasury department, she was very useful in the dirty work of the establishment, and had also some knowledge of the stables, and could assist the whippers-in at a pinch. Scarli Tapa, going home and taking

the discreet slave aside, related to her how her master was quartered, and how it was now their business to disguise the fact, and deceive the neighbours. Jobbiana replied, To hear is to obey.

Accordingly, before day—for she always avoided daylight—the discreet slave went to a certain cobbler whom she knew, and found him sitting in his stall in the public street. Good morrow, friend, said she, will you bring the tools of your trade and come to a House with me? Willingly, but what to do? replied the cobbler, who was a merry fellow. Nothing against my patriotism and conscience, I hope (at which he laughed heartily)? Not in the least, returned Jobbiana, giving him another bribe. But, you must go into the House blindfold and with your hands tied; you don't mind that for a job? I don't mind anything for a job, returned the cobbler, with vivacity; I like a job. It is my business to job; only make it worth my while, and I am ready for any job you may please to name. At the same time he arose briskly. Jobbiana then imparted to him the quartering that had taken place, and that he was wanted to cobble the subject up and hide what had been done. Is that all? If it is no more than that, returned the cobbler, blind my eyes and tie my hands, and let us cobble away as long as you like.

Sire, the discreet slave blindfolded the cobbler, and tied his hands, and took him to the House; where he cobbled the subject up with so much skill, that she rewarded him munificently. We must now return to the Captain of the Robbers, whose name was Yawyawah, and whose soul was filled with perplexities and anxieties, when he visited the cave and found, from the state of the wheaten loaves and the gold and silver fishes, that there was yet another person who possessed the secret of the magic door.

Your majesty must know that Yawyawah, Captain of the Robbers (most of whose forefathers had been rebellious Genii, who never had had anything whatever to do with SOLOMON), sauntering through the city, in a highly disconsolate and languid state, chanced to come before daylight upon the cobbler working in his stall. Good morrow, honourable friend, said he, you job early. My Lord, returned the cobbler, I job early and late. You do well, observed the Captain of the Robbers; but have you light enough? The less light the better, said the cobbler, for *my* work.

Ah! returned Yawyawah; why so? Why so! repeated the cobbler, winking, because I can cobble certain businesses best in the dark. When the Captain of the Robbers heard him say this, he quickly understood the hint. He blindfolded him, and tied his hands, as the discreet slave had done, turned his coat, and led him away until he stopped at the House. This is the House that was concerned in the quartering and cobbling, said he. The Captain set a mark upon it. But Jobbiana coming by soon afterwards, and seeing what had been done, set exactly the same mark upon twenty other Houses in the same row. So that in truth they were all precisely alike, and one was marked by Jobbiana exactly as another was, and there was not a pin to choose between them.

Thus discomfited, the Captain of the Robbers called his troop together and addressed them. My noble, right honourable, honourable and gallant, honourable and learned, and simply honourable, friends, said he, it is apparent that we, the old band who for so many years have possessed the command of the magic door, are in danger of being superseded. In a word, it is clear that there are now two bands of robbers, and that we must overcome the opposition, or be ourselves vanquished. All the robbers applauded this sentiment. Therefore, said the Captain, I will disguise myself as a trader—in the patriotic line of business—and will endeavour to prevail by stratagem. The robbers as with one voice approved of this design.

The Captain of the Robbers accordingly disguised himself as a trader of that sort which is called at the bazaars a patriot, and, having again had recourse to the cobbler, and having carefully observed the House, arranged his plans without delay. Feigning to be a dealer in soft-soap, he concealed his men in nine-and-thirty jars of that commodity, a man in every jar; and, loading a number of mules with this pretended merchandise, appeared at the head of his caravan one evening at the House, where Scarli Tapa was sitting on a bench in his usual place, taking it (as he generally did in the house) very coolly. My Lord, said the pretended trader, I am a stranger here, and know not where to bestow my merchandise for the night. Suffer me then, I beseech you, to warehouse it here. Scarli Tapa rose up, showed the pretended merchant where to put his goods, and instructed Jobbiana to prepare an entertainment

for his guest. Also a bath for himself; his hands being very far from clean.

The discreet slave, in obedience to her orders, proceeded to prepare the entertainment and the bath; but was vexed to discover, when it was late and the shops of the dealers were all shut, that there was no soft-soap in the house—which was the more unexpected, as there was generally more than enough. Remembering, however, that the pretended trader had brought a large stock with him, she went to one of the jars to get a little. As she drew near to it, the impatient robber within, supposing it to be his leader, said in a low voice, Is it time for our party to come in? Jobbiana, instantly comprehending the danger, replied, Not yet, but presently. She went in this manner to all the jars, receiving the same question, and giving the same answer.

The discreet slave returned into the kitchen, with her presence of mind not at all disturbed, and there prepared a lukewarm mess of soothing syrup, worn-out wigs, weak milk and water, poppy-heads, empty nut-shells, froth, and other similar ingredients. When it was sufficiently mawkish, she returned to the jars, bearing a large kettle filled with this mixture, poured some of it upon every robber, and threw the whole troop into a state of insensibility or submission. She then returned to the House, served up the entertainment, cleared away the fragments, and attired herself in a rich dress to dance before her master and his disguised visitor.

In the course of her dances, which were performed in the slowest time, and during which she blew both her own and the family trumpet with extraordinary pertinacity, Jobbiana took care always to approach nearer and still nearer to the Captain of the Robbers. At length she seized him by the sleeve of his disguise, disclosed him in his own dress to her master, and related where his men were, and how they had asked Was it time to come in? Scarli Tapa, so far from being angry with the pretended trader, fell upon his neck and addressed him in these friendly expressions: Since our object is the same and no great difference exists between us, O my brother, let us form a Coalition. Debrett's Peerage will open Sesame to the Scarli Tapas and the Yawyawahs equally, and will shut out the rest of mankind. Let it be so. There is plunder enough in the cave.

So that it is never restored to the original owners and never gets into other hands but ours, why should we quarrel overmuch? The Captain made a suitable reply and embraced his entertainer. Jobbiana, shedding tears of joy, embraced them both.

Shortly afterwards, Scarli Tapa in gratitude to the wise Jobbiana, caused her to be invested with the freedom of the City—where she had been very much beloved for many years—and gave her in marriage to his own son. They had a large family and a powerful number of relations, who all inherited, by right of relationship, the power of opening Sesame and shutting it tight. The Yawyawahs became a very numerous tribe also, and exercised the same privilege. This, Commander of the Faithful, is the reason why, in that distant part of the dominions of the Sultan of the Indies, all true believers kiss the ground seven hundred and seventy-seven times on hearing the magic words, Debrett's Peerage—why the talisman of Office is always possessed in common by the three great races of the Scarli Tapas, the Yawyawahs, and the Jobbianas—why the public affairs, great and small, and all the national enterprises both by land and sea are conducted on a system which is the highest peak of the mountain of justice, and which always succeeds—why the people of that country are serenely satisfied with themselves and things in general, are unquestionably the envy of surrounding nations, and cannot fail in the inevitable order of events to flourish to the end of the world—why all these great truths are incontrovertible, and why all who dispute them receive the bastinado as atheists and rebels.

Here, Hansardadade concluded the story of the Forty Thieves, and said, If my Lord the Sultan will deign to hear another narrative from the lips of the lowest of his servants, I have adventures yet more surprising than these to relate; adventures that are worthy to be written in letters of gold. By Allah! exclaimed the Sultan, whose hand had been upon his scimitar several times during the previous recital, and whose eyes had menaced Parmarstoon until the soul of that Vizier had turned to water, what thou hast told but now, deserves to be recorded in letters of Brass!

Hansardadade was proceeding, Sire, in the great plain at the feet of the mountains of Casgar, which is seven weeks' journey across—when Brothartoon interrupted her:

Sister, it is nearly daybreak, and if you are not asleep you ought to be. I pray you, dear sister, tell us at present no more of those stories that you know so well, but hold your tongue and go to bed. Hansardadade was silent, and the Sultan arose in a very indifferent humour and gloomily walked out—in great doubt whether he would let her live, on any consideration, over another day.

On the following night, Hansardadade proceeded with:

THE STORY OF THE TALKATIVE BARBER.

In the great plain which lies at the feet of the mountains of Casgar, which is seven weeks' journey across, there is a city where a lame young man was once invited, with other guests, to an entertainment. Upon his entrance, the company already assembled rose up to do him honour, and the host, taking him by the hand, invited him to sit down with the rest upon the estrade. At the same time the master of the house greeted his visitor with the salutation, Allah is Allah, there is no Allah but Allah, may his name be praised, and may Allah be with you.

Sire, the lame young man, who had the appearance of one that had suffered much, was about to comply with the invitation of the master of the house to seat himself upon the estrade with the rest of the company, when he suddenly perceived among them, a Barber. He instantly flew back with every token of abhorrence, and made towards the door. The master of the house, amazed at this behaviour, stopped him. Sir, exclaimed the young man, I adjure you by Mecca, do not stop me, let me go. I cannot without horror look upon that abominable Barber. Upon him and upon the whole of his relations be the curse of Allah, in return for all I have endured from his intolerable levity, and from his talk never being to the point or purpose! With these words, the lame young man again made violently towards the door. The guests were astonished at this behaviour, and began to have a very bad opinion of the Barber.

The master of the house so courteously entreated the lame young man to recount to the company the causes of this strong dislike, that at length he could not refuse. Averting his head so that he might not see the Barber, he proceeded. Gentlemen, you must know that this accursed Barber is the cause of my being crippled, and is the occa-

sion of all my misfortunes. I became acquainted with him in the following manner.

I am called PUBLEEK, or the Many Headed. I am one of a large family, who have undergone an infinite variety of adventures and afflictions. One day, I chanced to sit down to rest on a seat in a narrow lane, when a lattice over against me opened, and I obtained a glimpse of the most ravishing Beauty in the world. After watering a pot of budding flowers which stood in the window, she perceived me and modestly withdrew; but, not before she had directed towards me a glance so full of charms, that I screamed aloud with love and became insensible for a considerable time.

When I came to myself, I directed a favourite slave to make inquiries among the neighbours, and, on pain of death, to bring me an exact account of the young lady's family and condition. The slave acquitted himself so well, that he informed me within an hour that the young lady's name was FAIR GUVAWNMENT, and that she was the daughter of the chief Cadi. The violence of my passion became so great that I took to my bed that evening, fell into a fever, and was reduced to the brink of death, when an old lady of my acquaintance came to see me. Son, said she, after observing me attentively, I perceive that your disease is love. Inform me who is the object of your affections, and rely upon me to bring you together. This address of the good old lady's had such an effect upon me, that I immediately arose quite restored in health, and began to dress myself.

In a word (continued the lame young man, addressing the company assembled in the house of the citizen of the plain at the feet of the mountains of Casgar, and always keeping his head in such a position as that he could not see the Barber), the old lady exerted herself in my behalf with such effect, that on the very next day she returned, commissioned by the enchantress of my soul to appoint a meeting between us. I arranged to attire myself in my richest clothes, and despatched the same favourite slave with instructions to fetch a Barber, who knew his business, and who could skilfully prepare me for the interview I was to have, for the first time in all my life, with Fair Guvawnment. Gentlemen, the slave returned with the wretch whom you see here.

Sir, began this accursed Barber whom a malignant destiny thus inflicted on me, how do you do, I hope you are pretty well. I do not wish to praise myself, but you are lucky to have sent for me. My name is PRAYMIAH. In me you behold an accomplished diplomatist, a first-rate statesman, a frisky speaker, an easy shaver, a touch-and-go joker, a giver of the go-by to all complainers, and above all a member of the aristocracy of Barbers. Sir, I am a lineal descendant of the Prophet, and consequently a born Barber. All my relations, friends, acquaintances, connections, and associates are likewise lineal descendants of the Prophet, and consequently born Barbers every one. As I said, but the other day, to LAYARDEEN, or the Troublesome, the aristocracy—May Allah confound thy aristocracy and thee! cried I, will you begin to shave me?

Gentlemen (proceeded the lame young man), the Barber had brought a showy case with him, and he consumed such an immense time in pretending to open it, that I was well nigh fretted to death. I will not be shaved at all, said I. Sir, returned the unabashed Barber, you sent for me to shave you, and with your pardon I will do it, whether you like it or not. Ah, Sir! you have not so good an opinion of me as your father had. I knew your father, and he appreciated me. I said a thousand pleasant things to him, and rendered him a thousand services, and he adored me. Just Heaven, he would exclaim, you are an inexhaustible fountain of wisdom, no man can plumb the depth of your profundity. My dear sir, I would reply, you do me more honour than I deserve. Still, as a lineal descendant of the Prophet, and one of the aristocracy of born Barbers, I will, with the help of Allah, shave you pretty close before I have done with you.

You may guess, gentlemen, in my state of expectancy, with my heart set on Fair Guvawnment, and the precious time running by, how I cursed this impertinent chattering on the part of the Barber. Barber of mischief, Barber of sin, Barber of false pretence, Barber of froth and bubble, said I, stamping my foot upon the ground, will you begin to do your work? Fair and softly, sir, said he, let me count you out first. With that, he counted from one up to thirty-eight with great deliberation, and then laughed heartily and went out to look at the weather.

When the Barber returned, he went on prattling as be-

fore. You are in high feather, Sir, he said. I am glad to see you look so well. But, how can you be otherwise than flourishing, after having sent for *me!* I am called the Careless. I am not like Dizzee, who draws blood; nor like Dàrbee, who claps on blisters; nor like Johnnee, who works with the square and rule; I am the easy shaver, and I care for nobody, I can do anything. Shall I dance the dance of Mistapit to please you, or shall I sing the song of Mistafoks, or joke the joke of Jomillah? Honour me with your attention while I do all three.

The Barber (continued the lame young man, with a groan) danced the dance of Mistapit, and sang the song of Mistafoks, and joked the joke of Jomillah, and then began with fresh impertinences. Sir, said he, with a lofty flourish, when Britteen first at Heaven's command, arose from out the azure main, this was the charter of the land, and guardian angels sang this strain: Singing, as First Lord was a wallerking the Office-garding around, no end of born Barbers he picked up and found, says he, I will load them with silver and gold, for the country's a donkey, and as such is sold.—At this point I could bear his insolence no longer, but starting up, cried, Barber of hollowness, by what consideration am I restrained from falling upon and strangling thee? Calmly, Sir, said he, let me count you out first. He then played his game of counting from one to under forty, and again laughed heartily, and went out to take the height of the sun, and make a calculation of the state of the wind, that he might know whether it was an auspicious time to begin to shave me.

I took the opportunity (said the young man) of flying from my house so darkened by the fatal presence of this detestable Barber, and of repairing with my utmost speed to the house of the Cadi. But, the appointed hour was long past, and Fair Guvawnment had withdrawn no one knew whither. As I stood in the street cursing my evil destiny and execrating this intolerable Barber, I heard a hue and cry. Looking in the direction whence it came, I saw the diabolical Barber, attended by an immense troop of his relations and friends, the lineal descendants of the Prophet and aristocracy of born Barbers, all offering a reward to any one who would stop me, and all proclaiming the unhappy Publeek to be their natural prey and rightful

property I turned and fled. They jostled and bruised me cruelly among them, and I became maimed, as you see. I utterly detest, abominate, and abjure this Barber, and ever since and evermore I totally renounce him. With these concluding words, the lame young man arose in a sullen way that had something very threatening in it, and left the company.

Commander of the Faithful, when the lame young man was gone, the guests, turning to the Barber, who wore his turban very much on one side and smiled complacently, asked him what he had to say for himself. The Barber immediately danced the dance of Mistapit, and sang the song of Mistafoks, and joked the joke of Jomillah. Gentlemen, said he, not at all out of breath after these performances, it is true that I am called the Careless; permit me to recount to you, as a lively diversion, what happened to a twin brother of that young man who has so undeservedly abused me, in connection with a near relation of mine. No one objecting, the Barber related:

THE STORY OF THE BARMECIDE FEAST.

The young man's twin brother, GULD PUBLEEK, was in very poor circumstances and hardly knew how to live. In his reduced condition he was fain to go about to great men, begging them to take him in—and to do them justice, they did it extensively.

One day in the course of his poverty-stricken wanderings, he came to a large house with two high towers, a spacious hall, and abundance of fine gilding, statuary, and painting. Although the house was far from finished, he could see enough to assure him that enormous sums of money must be lavished upon it. He inquired who was the master of this wealthy mansion, and received for information that he was a certain Barmecide. (The Barmecide, gentlemen, is my near relation, and, like myself, a lineal descendant of the Prophet, and a born Barber.)

The young man's twin brother passed through the gateway, and crept submissively onward, until he came into a spacious apartment, where he descried the Barmecide sitting at the upper end of the post of honour. The Barmecide asked the young man's brother what he wanted. My Lord, replied he, in a pitiful tone, I am sore distressed,

and have none but high and mighty nobles like yourself to help me. That much at least is true, returned the Barmecide; there is no help save in high and mighty nobles, it is the appointment of Allah. But, what is your distress? My Lord, said the young man's brother, I am fasting from all the nourishment I want, and—whatever you may please to think—am in a dangerous extremity. A very little more at any moment, and you would be astonished at the figure I should make. Is it so, indeed? inquired the Barmecide. Sir, returned the young man's brother, I swear by Heaven and Earth that it is so, and Heaven and Earth are every hour drawing nearer to the discovery that it is so. Alas, poor man! replied the Barmecide, pretending to have an interest in him. Ho, boy! Bring us of the best here, and let us not spare our liberal measures. This poor man shall make good cheer without delay.

Though no boy appeared, gentlemen, and though there was no sign of the liberal measures of which the Barmecide spoke so ostentatiously, the young man's brother, Guld Publeek, endeavoured to fall in with the Barmecide's humour. Come! cried the Barmecide, feigning to pour water on his hands, let us begin fair and fresh. How do you like this purity? Ah, my Lord, returned Guld Publeek, imitating the Barmecide's action, this is indeed—purity: this is in truth a delicious beginning. Then let us proceed, said the Barmecide, seeming to dry his hands, with this smoking dish of Reefawm. How do you like it? Fat? At the same time he pretended to hand choice morsels to the young man's brother. Take your fill of it, exclaimed the Barmecide, there is plenty here, do not spare it, it was cooked for you. May Allah prolong your life, my Lord, said Guld Publeek, you are liberal indeed!

The Barmecide having boasted in this pleasant way of his smoking dish of Reefawm, which had no existence, affected to call for another dish. Ho! cried he, clapping his hands, bring in those Educational Kabobs. Then, he imitated the action of putting some upon the plate of the young man's brother, and went on. How do you like these Educational Kabobs? The cook who made them is a treasure. Are they not justly seasoned? Are they not so honestly made as to be adapted to all digestions? You want them very much, I know, and have wanted them this long time. Do you enjoy them? And there is a delicious mess,

called Foreen Leejun. Eat of it also, for I pride myself upon it, and expect it to bring me great respect and much friendship from distant lands. And this pillau of Church-endowments-and-duties, which you see so beautifully divided, pray how do you approve of this pillau? It was invented on your account, and no expense has been spared to render it to your taste. Ho, boy, bring in that ragout. Now here, my friend, is a ragout, called Law-of-Partnership. It is expressly made for poor men's eating, and I particularly pride myself upon it. This is indeed a dish at which you may cut and come again. And boy! hasten to set before my good friend, Guld Publeek, the rare stew of colonial spices, minced crime, hashed poverty, swollen liver of ignorance, stale confusion, rotten tape, and chopped-up bombast, steeped in official sauce, and garnished with a great deal of tongue and a very little brains—the crowning dish, of which my dear friend never can have enough, and upon which he thrives so well. But, you don't eat with an appetite, my brother, said the Barmecide. I fear the repast is hardly to your liking? Pardon me, my benefactor, returned the guest, whose jaws ached with pretending to eat, I am full almost to the throat.

Well then, said the Barmecide, since you have dined so well, try the dessert. Here are apples of discord from the Horse Guards and Admiralty, here is abundance of the famous fruit from the Dead Sea that turns to ashes on the lips, here are dates from the Peninsula in great profusion, and here is a fig for the nation. Eat and be happy. My Lord, replied the object of his merriment, I am quite worn out by your liberality, and can bear no more.

Gentlemen (continued the loquacious Barber), when the humorous Barmecide, my near relation lineally descended from the Prophet, had brought his guest to this pass, he clapped his hands three times to summon around him his slaves, and instructed them to force in reality the vile stew of which he had spoken down the throat of the hungry Guld Publeek, together with a nauseous mess called DUBLINCUMTAX, and to put bitters in his drink, strew dust on his head, blacken his face, shave his eyebrows, pluck away his beard, insult him, and make merry with him. He then caused him to be attired in a shameful dress and set upon an ass with his face to the tail, and in this state to be publicly exposed with the inscription round his neck,

This is the punishment of Guld Publeek who asked for nourishment and said he wanted it. Such is the present droll condition of this person; while my near relation, the Barmecide, sits in the post of honour with his turban very much on one side, enjoying the joke. Which I think you will all admit is an excellent one.

Hansardadade having made an end of the discourse of the loquacious Barber, would have instantly begun another story, had not Brothartoon shut her up with, Dear Sister, it will be shortly daybreak. Get to bed and be quiet.

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*SMUGGLED RELATIONS.

When I was a child I remember to have had my ears boxed for informing a lady-visitor who made a morning call at our house, that a certain ornamental object on the table, which was covered with marbled-paper, "wasn't marble." Years of reflection upon this injury have fully satisfied me that the honest object in question never imposed upon anybody; further, that my honoured parents, though both of a sanguine temperament, never can have conceived it possible that it might, could, should, would, or did, impose upon anybody. Yet, I have no doubt that I had my ears boxed for violating a tacit compact in the family and among the family visitors, to blink the stubborn fact of the marbled paper, and agree upon a fiction of real marble.

Long after this, when my ears had been past boxing for a quarter of a century, I knew a man with a cork leg. That he had a cork leg—or, at all events, that he was at immense pains to take about with him a leg which was not his own leg, or a real leg—was so plain and obvious a circumstance, that the whole universe might have made affidavit of it. Still, it was always understood that this cork leg was to be regarded as a leg of flesh and blood, and even that the very subject of cork in the abstract was to be avoided in the wearer's society.

I have had my share of going about the world; wherever I have been, I have found the marbled paper and the cork leg. I have found them in many forms; but, of all their

Protean shapes, at once the commonest and strangest has been—Smuggled Relations.

I was on intimate terms for many, many years, with my late lamented friend, Cogsford, of the great Greek house of Cogsford Brothers and Cogsford. I was his executor. I believe he had no secrets from me but one—his mother. That the agreeable old lady who kept his house for him *was* his mother, must be his mother, couldn't possibly be anybody but his mother, was evident: not to me alone, but to everybody who knew him. She was not a refugee, she was not proscribed, she was not in hiding, there was no price put upon her venerable head; she was invariably liked and respected as a good-humoured, sensible, cheerful old soul. Then why did Cogsford smuggle his mother all the days of his life? I have not the slightest idea why. I cannot so much as say whether she had ever contracted a second marriage, and her name was really Mrs. Bean: or whether that name was bestowed upon her as a part of the smuggling transaction. I only know that there she used to sit at one end of the hospitable table, the living image in a cap of Cogsford at the other end, and that Cogsford knew that I knew who she was. Yet, if I had been a Custom-house officer at Folkestone and Mrs. Bean a French clock that Cogsford was furtively bringing from Paris in a hat-box, he could not have made her the subject of a more determined and deliberate pretence. It was prolonged for years upon years. It survived the good old lady herself. One day I received an agitated note from Cogsford, entreating me to go to him immediately; I went, and found him weeping and in the greatest affliction. "My dear friend," said he, pressing my hand, "I have lost Mrs. Bean. She is no more." I went to the funeral with him. He was in the deepest grief. He spoke of Mrs. Bean on the way back, as the best of women. But, even then he never hinted that Mrs. Bean was his mother; and the first and last acknowledgment of the fact that I ever had from him was in his last will, wherein he entreated "his said dear friend and executor" to observe that he requested to be buried beside his mother—whom he didn't even name, he was so perfectly confident that I had detected Mrs. Bean.

I was once acquainted with another man who smuggled a brother. This contraband relative made mysterious appearances and disappearances, and knew strange things.

He was called John—simply John. I have got into a habit of believing that he must have been under a penalty to forfeit some weekly allowance if he ever claimed a surname. He came to light in this way;—I wanted some information respecting the remotest of the Himalaya range of mountains, and I applied to my friend Benting (a member of the Geographical Society, and learned on such points) to advise me. After some consideration, Benting said, in a half-reluctant and constrained way, very unlike his usual frank manner, that he "thought he knew a man" who could tell me, of his own experience, what I wanted to learn. An appointment was made for a certain evening at Benting's house. I arrived first, and had not observed for more than five minutes that Benting was under a curious cloud, when his servant announced—in a hushed, and I may say unearthly manner—"Mr. John." A rather stiff and shabby person appeared, who called Benting by no name whatever (a singularity that I always observed whenever I saw them together afterwards), and whose manner was curiously divided between familiarity and distance. I found this man to have been all over the Indies, and to possess an extraordinary fund of traveller's experience. It came from him drily at first; but he warmed, and it flowed freely until he happened to meet Benting's eye. Then, he subsided again, and (it appeared to me) felt himself, for some unknown reason, in danger of losing that weekly allowance. This happened a dozen times in a couple of hours, and not the least curious part of the matter was, that Benting himself was always as much disconcerted as the other man. It did not occur to me that night, that this was Benting's brother, for I had known him very well indeed for years, and had always understood him to have none. Neither can I now recall, nor if I could, would it matter, by what degrees and stages I arrived at the knowledge. However this may be, I knew it, and Benting knew that I knew it. But, we always preserved the fiction that I could have no suspicion that there was any sort of kindred or affinity between them. He went to Mexico, this John—and he went to Australia—and he went to China—and he died somewhere in Persia—and one day, when we went down to dinner at Benting's, I would find him in the dining-room, already seated (as if he had just been counting the allowance on the tablecloth), and another day I

would hear of him as being among scarlet parrots in the tropics; but, I never knew whether he had ever done anything wrong, or whether he had ever done anything right, or why he went about the world, or how. As I have already signified, I get into habits of believing; and I have got into a habit of believing that Mr. John had something to do with the dip of the magnetic needle—he is all vague and shadowy to me, however, and I only know him for certain to have been a smuggled relation.

Other people, again, put these contraband commodities entirely away from the light, as smugglers of wine and brandy bury tubs. I have heard of a man who never imparted, to his most intimate friend, the terrific secret that he had a relation in the world, except when he lost one by death; and then he would be weighed down by the greatness of the calamity, and would refer to his bereavement as if he had lost the very shadow of himself, from whom he had never been separated since the days of infancy. Within my own experience, I have observed smuggled relations to possess a wonderful quality of coming out when they die. My own dear Tom, who married my fourth sister, and who is a great smuggler, never fails to speak to me of one of his relations newly deceased, as though, instead of never having in the remotest way alluded to that relative's existence before, he had been perpetually discoursing of it. "My poor, dear, darling Emmy," he said to me, within these six months, "she is gone—I have lost her." Never until that moment had Tom breathed one syllable to me of the existence of any Emmy whomsoever on the face of this earth, in whom he had the smallest interest. He had scarcely allowed me to understand, very distantly and generally, that he had some relations—"my people," he called them—down in Yorkshire. "My own dear, darling Emmy," says Tom, notwithstanding, "she has left me for a better world." (Tom must have left her for his own world, at least fifteen years.) I repeated, feeling my way, "Emmy, Tom?" "My favourite niece," said Tom, in a reproachful tone, "Emmy you know. I was her godfather, you remember. Darling, fair-haired Emmy! Precious, blue-eyed child." Tom burst into tears, and we both understood that henceforth the fiction was established between us that I had been quite familiar with Emmy by reputation, through a series of years.

Occasionally, smuggled relations are discovered by accident: just as those tubs may be, to which I have referred. My other half—I mean, of course, my wife—once discovered a large cargo in this way, which had long been concealed. In the next street to us, lived an acquaintance of ours, who was a Commissioner of something or other, and kept a handsome establishment. We used to exchange dinners, and I have frequently heard him at his own table mention his father as a "poor dear good old boy," who had been dead for any indefinite period. He was rather fond of telling anecdotes of his very early days, and from them it appeared that he had been an only child. One summer afternoon, my other half, walking in our immediate neighbourhood, happened to perceive Mrs. Commissioner's last year's bonnet (to every inch of which, it is unnecessary to add, she could have sworn), going along before her on somebody else's head. Having heard generally of the swell mob, my good lady's first impression was, that the wearer of this bonnet belonged to that fraternity, had just abstracted the bonnet from its place of repose, was in every sense of the term walking off with it, and ought to be given into the custody of the nearest policeman. Fortunately, however, my Susannah, who is not distinguished by closeness of reasoning or presence of mind, reflected, as it were by a flash of inspiration, that the bonnet might have been given away. Curious to see to whom, she quickened her steps, and descried beneath it, an ancient lady of an iron-bound presence, in whom (for my Susannah has an eye) she instantly recognised the lineaments of the Commissioner. Eagerly pursuing this discovery, she, that very afternoon, tracked down an ancient gentleman in one of the Commissioner's hats. Next day she came upon the trail of four stony maidens decorated with artificial flowers out of the Commissioner's epergne; and thus we dug up the Commissioner's father and mother and four sisters, who had been for some years secreted in lodgings round the corner and never entered the Commissioner's house save in the dawn of morning and the shades of evening. From that time forth, whenever my Susannah made a call at the Commissioner's, she always listened on the doorstep for any slight preliminary scuffling in the hall, and, hearing it, was delighted to remark, "The family are here, and they are hiding them."

I have never been personally acquainted with any gentleman who kept his mother-in-law in the kitchen, in the useful capacity of Cook; but I have heard of such a case on good authority. I once lodged in the house of a genteel lady claiming to be a widow, who had four pretty children, and might be occasionally overheard coercing an obscure man in a sleeved waistcoat, who appeared to be confined in some Pit below the foundations of the house, where he was condemned to be always cleaning knives. One day, the smallest of the children crept into my room, said, pointing downward with a little chubby finger, "Don't tell! It's Pa!" and vanished on tiptoe.

One other branch of the smuggling trade demands a word of mention before I conclude. My friend of friends in my bachelor days became the friend of the house when I got married. He is our Amelia's godfather; Amelia being the eldest of our cherubs. Through upwards of ten years he was backwards and forwards at our house three or four times a week, and always found his knife and fork ready for him. What was my astonishment on coming home one day, to find Susannah sunk upon the oil-cloth in the hall, holding her brow with both hands, and meeting my gaze, when I admitted myself with my latch-key, in a distracted manner. "Susannah!" I exclaimed, "what has happened?" She merely ejaculated "Larver"—that being the name of the friend in question. "Susannah," said I, "what of Larver? Speak! Has he met with any accident? Is he ill?" Susannah replied faintly, "Married—married before we were!" and would have gone into hysterics but that I make a rule of never permitting that disorder under my roof.

For upwards of ten years, my bosom friend Larver, in close communication with me every day, had smuggled a wife. He had at last confided the truth to Susannah, and had presented Mrs. Larver. There was no kind of reason for this, that we could ever find out. Even Susannah had not a doubt of things being all correct. He had "run" Mrs. Larver into a little cottage in Hertfordshire, and nobody ever knew why, or ever will know. In fact, I believe there was no why in it.

The most astonishing part of the matter is, that I have known other men do exactly the same thing. I could give the names of a dozen in a footnote, if I thought it right.

THE GREAT BABY.

HAS it occurred to any of our readers that that is surely an unsatisfactory state of society which presents, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-five, the spectacle of a committee of the People's representatives pompously and publicly inquiring how the People shall be trusted with the liberty of refreshing themselves in humble taverns and tea-gardens on their day of rest? Does it appear to any one whom we now address, and who will pause here to reflect for a moment on the question we put, that there is anything at all humiliating and incongruous in the existence of such a body, and pursuit of such an inquiry, in this country, at this time of day?

For ourselves, we will answer the question without hesitation. We feel indignantly ashamed of the thing as a national scandal. It would be merely contemptible, if it were not raised into importance by its slanderous aspersions of a hard-worked, heavily-taxed, but good-humoured and most patient people, who have long deserved far better treatment. In this green midsummer, here is a committee virtually inquiring whether the English can be regarded in any other light, and domestically ruled in any other manner, than as a gang of drunkards and disorderlies on a Police charge-sheet! O my Lords and Gentlemen, my Lords and Gentlemen, have we got so very near Utopia after our long travelling together over the dark and murderous road of English history, that we have nothing else left to say and do to the people but this? Is there nothing abroad, nothing at home, nothing seen by us, nothing hidden from us, which points to higher and more generous things?

There are two public bodies remarkable for knowing nothing of the people, and for perpetually interfering to put them right. The one is the House of Commons; the other the Monomaniacs. Between the Members and the Monomaniacs, the devoted People, quite unheard, get harried and worried to the last extremity. Everybody of ordinary sense, possessing common sympathies with necessities not their own, and common means of observation—Members and Monomaniacs are of course excepted—has perceived

for months past, that it was manifestly impossible that the People could or would endure the inconveniences and deprivations sought to be imposed upon them by the latest Sunday restrictions. We who write this have again and again by word of mouth forewarned many scores both of Members and Monomaniacs, as we have heard others forewarn them, that what they were in the densest ignorance allowing to be done could not be borne. Members and Monomaniacs knew better, or cared nothing about it; and we all know the rest—to this time.

Now, the Monomaniacs, being by their disease impelled to clamber upon platforms, and there squint horribly under the strong possession of an unbalanced idea, will of course be out of reason and go wrong. But, why the Members should yield to the Monomaniacs is another question. And why do they? Is it because the People is altogether an abstraction to them; a Great Baby, to be coaxed and chucked under the chin at elections, and frowned upon at quarter sessions, and stood in the corner on Sundays, and taken out to stare at the Queen's coach on holidays, and kept in school under the rod, generally speaking, from Monday morning to Saturday night? Is it because they have no other idea of the People than a big-headed Baby, now to be flattered and now to be scolded, now to be sung to and now to be denounced to old Boguey, now to be kissed and now to be whipped, but always to be kept in long clothes, and never under any circumstances to feel its legs and go about of itself? We take the liberty of replying, yes.

And do the Members and Monomaniacs suppose that this is *our* discovery? Do they live in the shady belief that the object of their capricious dandling and punishing does not resentfully perceive that it is made a Great Baby of, and may not begin to kick thereat with legs that may do mischief?

In the first month of the existence of this Journal, we called attention to a detachment of the Monomaniacs, who, under the name of jail-chaplains, had taken possession of the prisons, and were clearly offering premiums to vice, promoting hypocrisy, and making models of dangerous scoundrels. They had their way, and the Members backed them; and now their Pets recruit the very worst class of criminals known. The Great Baby, to whom this copy

was set as a moral lesson, is supposed to be perfectly unimpressed by the real facts, and to be entirely ignorant of them. So, down at Westminster, night after night, the Right Honourable Gentleman the Member for Somewhere, and the Honourable Gentleman the Member for Somewhereelse, badger one another, to the infinite delight of their adherents in the cockpit; and when the Prime Minister has released his noble bosom of its personal injuries, and has made his jokes and retorts for the evening, and has said little and done less, he winds up with a standard form of words respecting the vigorous prosecution of the war, and a just and honourable peace, which are especially let off upon the Great Baby; which Baby is always supposed never to have heard before; and which it is understood to be a part of Baby's catechism to be powerfully affected by. And the Member for Somewhere, and the Member for Somewhereelse, and the Noble Lord, and all the rest of the Honourable House, go home to bed, really persuaded that the Great Baby has been talked to sleep.

Let us see how the unfortunate Baby is addressed and dealt with, in the inquiry concerning his Sunday eatings and drinkings—as wild as a nursery rhyme, and as inconclusive as Bedlam.

The Great Baby is put upon his trial. A mighty noise of creaking boots is heard in an outer passage. O good gracious, here's an official personage! Here's a solemn witness! Mr. Gamp, we believe you have been a dry-nurse to the Great Baby for some years? Yes, I have.—Intimately acquainted with his character? Intimately acquainted.—As a police magistrate, Mr. Gamp? As a police magistrate. (Sensation.)—Pray, Mr. Gamp, would you allow a working man, a small tradesman, clerk, or the like, to go to Hampstead or to Hampton Court at his own convenience on a Sunday, with his family, and there to be at liberty to regale himself, and them, in a tavern where he could buy a pot of beer and a glass of gin-and-water? I would on no account concede that permission to any person.—Will you be so kind as to state why, Mr. Gamp?—Willingly. Because I have presided for many years at the Bo-peep office, and have seen a great deal of drunkenness there. A large majority of the Bo-peep charges are charges against persons of the lowest class, of having been found drunk and incapable of taking care of themselves.—Will

you instance a case, Mr. Gamp? I will instance the case of Sloggins.—Was that a man with a broken nose, a black eye, and a bull-dog? Precisely so.—Was Sloggins frequently the subject of such a charge? Continually; I may say, constantly.—Especially on Monday? Just so. Especially on Monday.—And therefore you would shut the public-houses, and particularly the suburban public-houses, against the free access of working people on Sunday? Most decidedly so. (Mr. Gamp retires, much complimented.)

Naughty Baby, attend to the Reverend Single Swallow. Mr. Swallow, you have been much in the confidence of thieves and miscellaneous miscreants? I have the happiness to believe that they have made me the unworthy depositary of their unbounded confidence.—Have they usually confessed to you that they have been in the habit of getting drunk? Not drunk; upon that point I wish to explain. Their ingenuous expression has generally been, "lushy."—But those are convertible terms? I apprehend they are; still, as gushing freely from a penitent breast, I am weak enough to wish to stipulate for lushy; I pray you bear with me.—Have you reason, Mr. Swallow, to believe that excessive indulgence in "lush" has been the cause of these men's crimes? O yes indeed. O yes!—Do you trace their offences to nothing else? They have always told me, that they themselves traced them to nothing else worth mentioning.—Are you acquainted with a man named Sloggins? O yes! I have the truest affection for Sloggins.—Has he made any confidence to you that you feel justified in disclosing, bearing on this subject of becoming lushy? Sloggins, when in solitary confinement, informed me, every morning for eight months, always with tears in his eyes, and uniformly at five minutes past eleven o'clock, that he attributed his imprisonment to his having partaken of rum-and-water at a licensed house of entertainment, called (I use his own words) The Wiry Tarrier. He never ceased to recommend that the landlord, landlady, young family, pot-boy, and the whole of the frequenters of that establishment, should be taken up.—Did you recommend Sloggins for a commutation of his term, on a ticket of leave? I did.—Where is he now? I believe he is in Newgate now.—Do you know what for? Not of my own knowledge, but I have heard that he got into trouble through having been

weakly tempted into the folly of garroting a market gardener.—Where was he taken for this last offence? At The Wiry Tarrier on a Sunday.—It is unnecessary to ask you, Mr. Single Swallow, whether you therefore recommend the closing of all public-houses on a Sunday? Quite unnecessary.

Bad Baby, fold your hands and listen to the Reverend Temple Pharisee, who will step out of his carriage at the Committee Door, to give you a character that will rather astonish you. Mr. Temple Pharisee, you are the incumbent of the extensive rectory of Camel-cum-Needle's-eye? I am.—Will you be so good as to state your experience of that district on a Sunday? Nothing can be worse. That part of the Rectory of Camel-cum-Needle's-eye in which my principal church is situated, abuts upon the fields. As I stand in the pulpit, I can actually see the people through the side windows of the building (when the heat of the weather renders it necessary to have them open), walking. I have, on some occasion, heard them laughing. Whistling has reached my curate's ears (he is an industrious and well-meaning young man); but I cannot say I have heard it myself.—Is your church well frequented? No. I have no reason to complain of the Pew-portion of my flock, who are eminently respectable; but, the Free seats are comparatively deserted: which is the more emphatically deplorable, as there are not many of them.—Is there a Railway near the church? I regret to state that there is, and that I hear the rush of the trains, even while I am preaching. —Do you mean to say that they do not slacken speed for your preaching? Not in the least.—Is there anything else near the church, to which you would call the Committee's attention? At the distance of a mile and a half and three rods (for my clerk has measured it by my direction), there is a common public-house with tea-gardens, called The Glimpse of Green. In fine weather these gardens are filled with people on a Sunday evening. Frightful scenes take place there. Pipes are smoked; liquors mixed with hot water are drunk; shrimps are eaten; cockles are consumed; tea is swilled; ginger-beer is loudly exploded. Young women with their young men; young men with their young women; married people with their children; baskets, bundles, little chaises, wicker-work perambulators, every species of low abomination, is to be observed there. As

the evening closes in, they all come straggling home together through the fields; and the vague sounds of merry conversation which then strike upon the ear, even at the farther end of my dining-room (eight-and-thirty feet by twenty-seven), are most distressing. I consider The Glimpse of Green irreconcilable with public morality.—Have you heard of pickpockets resorting to this place? I have. My clerk informed me that his uncle's brother-in-law, a marine store-dealer who went there to observe the depravity of the people, missed his pocket-handkerchief when he reached home. Local ribaldry has represented him to be one of the persons who had their pockets picked at St. Paul's Cathedral on the last occasion when the Bishop of London preached there. I beg to deny this; I know those individuals very well, and they were people of condition.—Do the mass of the inhabitants of your district work hard all the week? I believe they do.—Early and late? My curate reports so.—Are their houses close and crowded? I believe they are.—Abolishing The Glimpse of Green, where would you recommend them to go on a Sunday? I should say to church.—Where after church? Really, that is their affair; not mine.

Adamantine-hearted Baby, dissolve into scalding tears at sight of the next witness, banging his head and beating his breast. He was one of the greatest drunkards in the world, he tells you. When he was drunk, he was a very demon—and he never was sober. He never takes any strong drink now, and is as an angel of light. And because this man never could use without abuse; and because he imitated the Hyæna or other obscene animal, in not knowing, in the ferocity of his appetites, what Moderation was, therefore, O Big-headed Baby, you perceive that he must become as a standard for you; and for his backslidings you shall be put in the corner evermore.

Ghost of John Bunyan, it is surely thou who usherest into the Committee Room the volunteer testifier, Mr. Monomaniacal Patriarch! Baby, a finger in each eye, and ashes from the nearest dust-bin on your wretched head, for it is all over with you now. Mr. Monomaniacal Patriarch, have you paid great attention to drunkenness? Immense attention, unspeakable attention.—For how many years? Seventy years.—Mr. Monomaniacal Patriarch, have you ever been in Whitechapel? Millions of times.—Did you

ever shed tears over the scenes you have witnessed there? Oceans of tears.—Mr. Monomaniacal Patriarch, will you proceed with your testimony? Yes; I am the only man to be heard on the subject; I am the only man who knows anything about it. No connection with any other establishment; all others are impostors; I am the real original. Other men are said to have looked into these places, and to have worked to raise them out of the Slough of Despond. Don't believe it. Nothing is genuine unless signed by me. I am the original fly with the little eye. Nobody ever mourned over the miseries and vices of the lowest of the low, but I. Nobody has ever been haunted by them, waking and sleeping, but I. Nobody would raise up the sunken wretches, but I. Nobody understands how to do it, but I. —Do you think the People ever really want any beer or liquors to drink? Certainly not. I know all about it, and I know they don't.—Do you think they ever ought to have any beer or liquor to drink? Certainly not. I know all about it, and I know they oughtn't.—Do you think they could suffer any inconvenience from having their beer and liquor entirely denied them? Certainly not. I know all about it, and I know they couldn't.

Thus, the Great Baby is dealt with from the beginning to the end of the chapter. It is supposed equally by the Members and by the Monomaniacs to be incapable of putting This and That together, and of detecting the arbitrary nonsense of these monstrous deductions. That a whole people —a domestic, reasonable, considerate people, whose goodnature and good sense are the admiration of intelligent foreigners, and who are no less certain to secure the affectionate esteem of such of their own countrymen as will have the manhood to be open with them, and to trust them,— that a whole people should be judged by, and made to answer and suffer for, the most degraded and most miserable among them, is a principle so shocking in its injustice, and so lunatic in its absurdity, that to entertain it for a moment, is to exhibit profound ignorance of the English mind and character. In Monomaniacs this may be of great significance, but in Members it is alarming; for, if they cannot be brought to understand the People for whom they make laws, and if they so grievously under-rate them, how is it to be hoped that they, and the laws, and the People, being such a bundle of anomalies, can possibly thrive together?

It is not necessary for us, or for any decent person to go to Westminster, or anywhere else, to make a flourish against intemperance. We abhor it; would have no drunkard about us, on any consideration; would thankfully see the child of our heart dead in his baby beauty, rather than he should live and grow with the shadow of such a horror upon him. In the name of Heaven, let drunkards and ruffians restrain themselves and be restrained by all conceivable means—but, not govern, bind, and defame, the temperance, the industry, the rational wants and decent enjoyments of a whole toiling nation! We oppose those virtuous Malays who run amuck out of the House of Peers or Exeter Hall, as much as those vicious Malays who run amuck out of Sailors' lodging-houses in Rotherhithe. We have a constitutional objection in both cases to being stabbed in the back, and we claim that the one kind of Monomaniac has no more right than the other to gash and disfigure honest people going their peaceable way. Lastly, we humbly beg to assert and protest with all the vigour that is in us, that the People is, in sober truth and reality, something very considerably more than a Great Baby; that it has come to an age when it can distinguish sound from sense; that mere jingle will not do for it; in a word, that the Great Baby is growing up, and had best be measured accordingly.

OUT OF TOWN.

Sitting, on a bright September morning, among my books and papers at my open window on the cliff overhanging the sea-beach, I have the sky and ocean framed before me like a beautiful picture. A beautiful picture, but with such movement in it, such changes of light upon the sails of ships and wake of steam-boats, such dazzling gleams of silver far out at sea, such fresh touches on the crisp wave-tops as they break and roll towards me—a picture with such music in the billowy rush upon the shingle, the blowing of morning wind through the corn-sheaves where the farmers' waggons are busy, the singing of the larks, and the distant voices of children at play—such charms of sight and sound as all the Galleries on earth can but poorly suggest.

So dreamy is the murmur of the sea below my window, that I may have been here, for anything I know, one hundred years. Not that I have grown old, for, daily on the neighbouring downs and grassy hill-sides, I find that I can still in reason walk any distance, jump over anything, and climb up anywhere; but, that the sound of the ocean seems to have become so customary to my musings, and other realities seem so to have gone aboard ship and floated away over the horizon, that, for aught I will undertake to the contrary, I am the enchanted son of the King my father, shut up in a tower on the sea-shore, for protection against an old she-goblin who insisted on being my godmother, and who foresaw at the font—wonderful creature!—that I should get into a scrape before I was twenty-one. I remember to have been in a City (my Royal parent's dominions, I suppose), and apparently not long ago either, that was in the dreariest condition. The principal inhabitants had all been changed into old newspapers, and in that form were preserving their window-blinds from dust, and wrapping all their smaller household gods in curl-papers. I walked through gloomy streets where every house was shut up and newspapered, and where my solitary footsteps echoed on the deserted pavements. In the public rides there were no carriages, no horses, no animated existence, but a few sleepy policemen, and a few adventurous boys taking advantage of the devastation to swarm up the lamp-posts. In the Westward streets there was no traffic; in the Westward shops, no business. The water-patterns which the 'Prentices had trickled out on the pavements early in the morning, remained uneffaced by human feet. At the corners of mews, Cochin-China fowls stalked gaunt and savage; nobody being left in the deserted city (as it appeared to me), to feed them. Public Houses, where splendid footmen swinging their legs over gorgeous hammer-cloths beside wigged coachmen were wont to regale, were silent, and the unused pewter pots shone, too bright for business, on the shelves. I beheld a Punch's Show leaning against a wall near Park Lane, as if it had fainted. It was deserted, and there were none to heed its desolation. In Belgrave Square I met the last man—an ostler—sitting on a post in a ragged red waistcoat, eating straw, and mildewing away.

If I recollect the name of the little town, on whose shore

this sea is murmuring—but I am not just now, as I have premised, to be relied upon for anything—it is Pavilionstone. Within a quarter of a century, it was a little fishing town, and they do say, that the time was, when it was a little smuggling town. I have heard that it was rather famous in the hollands and brandy way, and that coevally with that reputation the lamplighter's was considered a bad life at the Assurance offices. It was observed that if he were not particular about lighting up, he lived in peace; but that, if he made the best of the oil-lamps in the steep and narrow streets, he usually fell over the cliff at an early age. Now, gas and electricity run to the very water's edge, and the South Eastern Railway Company screech at us in the dead of night.

But, the old little fishing and smuggling town remains, and is so tempting a place for the latter purpose, that I think of going out some night next week, in a fur cap and a pair of petticoat trousers, and running an empty tub, as a kind of archæological pursuit. Let nobody with corns come to Pavilionstone, for there are breakneck flights of ragged steps, connecting the principal streets by back-ways, which will cripple that visitor in half-an-hour. These are the ways by which, when I run that tub, I shall escape. I shall make a Thermopylæ of the corner of one of them, defend it with my cutlass against the coast-guard until my brave companions have sheered off, then dive into the darkness, and regain my Susan's arms. In connection with these breakneck steps I observe some wooden cottages, with tumble-down out-houses, and back-yards three feet square, adorned with garlands of dried fish, in one of which (though the General Board of Health might object) my Susan dwells.

The South Eastern Company have brought Pavilionstone into such vogue, with their tidal trains and splendid steam-packets, that a new Pavilionstone is rising up. I am, myself, of New Pavilionstone. We are a little mortary and limey at present, but we are getting on capitally. Indeed, we were getting on so fast, at one time, that we rather overdid it, and built a street of shops, the business of which may be expected to arrive in about ten years. We are sensibly laid out in general; and with a little care and pains (by no means wanting, so far) shall become a very pretty place. We ought to be, for our situation is delight-

ful, our air is delicious, and our breezy hills and downs, carpeted with wild thyme, and decorated with millions of wild flowers, are, on the faith of a pedestrian, perfect. In New Pavilionstone we are a little too much addicted to small windows with more bricks in them than glass, and we are not over-fanciful in the way of decorative architecture, and we get unexpected sea-views through cracks in the street doors; on the whole, however, we are very snug and comfortable, and well accommodated. But the Home Secretary (if there be such an officer) cannot too soon shut up the burial-ground of the old parish church. It is in the midst of us, and Pavilionstone will get no good of it, if it be too long left alone.

The lion of Pavilionstone is its Great Hotel. A dozen years ago, going over to Paris by South Eastern Tidal Steamer, you used to be dropped upon the platform of the main line Pavilionstone Station (not a junction then), at eleven o'clock on a dark winter's night, in a roaring wind; and in the howling wilderness outside the station, was a short omnibus which brought you up by the forehead the instant you got in at the door; and nobody cared about you, and you were alone in the world. You bumped over infinite chalk, until you were turned out at a strange building which had just left off being a barn without having quite begun to be house, where nobody expected your coming, or knew what to do with you when you were come, and where you were usually blown about, until you happened to be blown against the cold beef, and finally into bed. At five in the morning you were blown out of bed, and after a dreary breakfast, with crumpled company, in the midst of confusion, were hustled on board a steam-boat and lay wretched on deck until you saw France lunging and surging at you with great vehemence over the bowsprit.

Now, you come down to Pavilionstone in a free and easy manner, an irresponsible agent, made over in trust to the South Eastern Company, until you get out of the railway-carriage at high-water mark. If you are crossing by the boat at once, you have nothing to do but walk on board and be happy there if you can—I can't. If you are going to our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, the sprightliest porters under the sun, whose cheerful looks are a pleasant welcome, shoulder your luggage, drive it off in vans, bowl it away in trucks, and enjoy themselves in playing athletic games

with it. If you are for public life at our great Pavilionstone Hotel, you walk into that establishment as if it were your club; and find ready for you, your news-room, dining-room, smoking-room, billiard-room, music-room, public breakfast, public dinner twice a day (one plain, one gorgeous), hot baths and cold baths. If you want to be bored, there are plenty of bores always ready for you, and from Saturday to Monday in particular you can be bored (if you like it) through and through. Should you want to be private at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, say but the word, look at the list of charges, choose your floor, name your figure—there you are, established in your castle, by the day, week, month, or year, innocent of all comers or goers, unless you have my fancy for walking early in the morning down the groves of boots and shoes, which so regularly flourish at all the chamber-doors before breakfast, that it seems to me as if nobody ever got up or took them in. Are you going across the Alps, and would you like to air your Italian at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel? Talk to the Manager—always conversational, accomplished, and polite. Do you want to be aided, abetted, comforted, or advised, at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel? Send for the good landlord, and he is your friend. Should you, or any one belonging to you, ever be taken ill at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, you will not soon forget him or his kind wife. And when you pay your bill at our Great Pavilionstone Hotel, you will not be put out of humour by anything you find in it.

A thoroughly good inn, in the days of coaching and posting, was a noble place. But no such inn would have been equal to the reception of four or five hundred people, all of them wet through, and half of them dead sick, every day in the year. This is where we shine, in our Pavilionstone Hotel. Again—who, coming and going, pitching and tossing, boating and training, hurrying in, and flying out, could ever have calculated the fees to be paid at an old-fashioned house? In our Pavilionstone Hotel vocabulary, there is no such word as fee. Everything is done for you; every service is provided at a fixed and reasonable charge; all the prices are hung up in all the rooms; and you can make out your own bill beforehand, as well as the book-keeper.

In the case of your being a pictorial artist, desirous of studying at small expense the physiognomies and beards of

different nations, come, on receipt of this, to Pavilionstone. You shall find all the nations of the earth, and all the styles of shaving and not shaving, hair cutting and hair letting alone, for ever flowing through our hotel. Couriers you shall see by hundreds; fat leathern bags for five-franc pieces, closing with violent snaps, like discharges of fire-arms, by thousands; more luggage in a morning than, fifty years ago, all Europe saw in a week. Looking at trains, steam-boats, sick travellers, and luggage, is our great Pavilionstone recreation. We are not strong in other public amusements. We have a Literary and Scientific Institution, and we have a Working Men's Institution—may it hold many gipsy holidays in summer fields, with the kettle boiling, the band of music playing, and the people dancing; and may I be on the hill-side, looking on with pleasure at a wholesome sight too rare in England!—and we have two or three churches, and more chapels than I have yet added up. But public amusements are scarce with us. If a poor theatrical manager comes with his company to give us, in a loft, Mary Bax, or the Murder on the Sand Hills, we don't care much for him—starve him out, in fact. We take more kindly to wax-work, especially if it moves; in which case it keeps much clearer of the second commandment than when it is still. Cooke's Circus (Mr. Cooke is my friend, and always leaves a good name behind him) gives us only a night in passing through. Nor does the travelling menagerie think us worth a longer visit. It gave us a look-in the other day, bringing with it the residentiary van with the stained-glass windows, which Her Majesty kept ready-made at Windsor Castle, until she found a suitable opportunity of submitting it for the proprietor's acceptance. I brought away five wonderments from this exhibition. I have wondered ever since, Whether the beasts ever do get used to those small places of confinement; Whether the monkeys have that very horrible flavour in their free state; Whether wild animals have a natural ear for time and tune, and therefore every four-footed creature began to howl in despair when the band began to play; What the giraffe does with his neck when his cart is shut up; and, Whether the elephant feels ashamed of himself when he is brought out of his den to stand on his head in the presence of the whole Collection.

We are a tidal harbour at Pavilionstone, as indeed I have

implied already in my mention of tidal trains. At low water, we are a heap of mud, with an empty channel in it where a couple of men in big boots always shovel and scoop: with what exact object, I am unable to say. At that time, all the stranded fishing-boats turn over on their sides, as if they were dead marine monsters; the colliers and other shipping stick disconsolate in the mud; the steamers look as if their white chimneys would never smoke more, and their red paddles never turn; again the green sea-slime and weed upon the rough stones at the entrance, seem records of obsolete high tides never more to flow; the flagstaff-halyards droop; the very little wooden lighthouse shrinks in the idle glare of the sun. And here I may observe of the very little wooden lighthouse, that when it is lighted at night,—red and green,—it looks so like a medical man's, that several distracted husbands have at various times been found, on occasions of premature domestic anxiety, going round and round it, trying to find the Nightbell.

But, the moment the tide begins to make, the Pavilion-stone Harbour begins to revive. It feels the breeze of the rising water before the water comes, and begins to flutter and stir. When the little shallow waves creep in, barely overlapping one another, the vanes at masthead wake and become agitated. As the tide rises, the fishing-boats get into good spirits and dance, the flagstaff hoists a bright red flag, the steam-boat smokes, cranes creak, horses and carriages dangle in the air, stray passengers and luggage appear. Now, the shipping is afloat, and comes up buoyantly, to look at the wharf. Now, the carts that have come down for coals, load away as hard as they can load. Now, the steamer smokes immensely, and occasionally blows at the paddle-boxes like a vaporous whale—greatly disturbing nervous loungers. Now, both the tide and the breeze have risen, and you are holding your hat on (if you want to see how the ladies hold *their* hats on, with a stay, passing over the broad brim and down the nose, come to Pavilion-stone). Now, everything in the harbour splashes, dashes, and bobs. Now, the Down Tidal Train is telegraphed, and you know (without knowing how you know), that two hundred and eighty-seven people are coming. Now, the fishing-boats that have been out, sail in at the top of the tide. Now, the bell goes, and the locomotive hisses and shrieks, and the train comes gliding in, and the two hundred and

eighty-seven come scuffling out. Now, there is not only a tide of water, but a tide of people, and a tide of luggage—all tumbling and flowing and bouncing about together. Now, after infinite bustle, the steamer steams out, and we (on the Pier) are all delighted when she rolls as if she would roll her funnel out, and are all disappointed when she don't. Now, the other steamer is coming in, and the Custom House prepares, and the wharf-labourers assemble, and the hawsers are made ready, and the Hotel Porters come rattling down with van and truck, eager to begin more Olympic games with more luggage. And this is the way in which we go on, down at Pavilionstone, every tide. And, if you want to live a life of luggage, or to see it lived, or to breathe sweet air which will send you to sleep at a moment's notice at any period of the day or night, or to disport yourself upon or in the sea, or to scamper about Kent, or to come out of town for the enjoyment of all or any of these pleasures, come to Pavilionstone.

OUT OF THE SEASON.

It fell to my lot, this last bleak spring, to find myself in a watering-place out of the season. A vicious north-east squall blew me into it from foreign parts, and I tarried in it alone for three days, resolved to be exceedingly busy.

On the first day, I began business by looking for two hours at the sea, and staring the Foreign Militia out of countenance. Having disposed of these important engagements, I sat down at one of the two windows of my room, intent on doing something desperate in the way of literary composition, and writing a chapter of unheard-of excellence —with which the present essay has no connection.

It is a remarkable quality in a watering-place out of the season, that everything in it, will and must be looked at. I had no previous suspicion of this fatal truth; but, the moment I sat down to write, I began to perceive it. I had scarcely fallen into my most promising attitude, and dipped my pen in the ink, when I found the clock upon the pier—a redfaced clock with a white rim—importuning me in a highly vexatious manner to consult my watch, and see how

I was off for Greenwich time. Having no intention of making a voyage or taking an observation, I had not the least need of Greenwich time, and could have put up with watering-place time as a sufficiently accurate article. The pier-clock, however, persisting, I felt it necessary to lay down my pen, compare my watch with him, and fall into a grave solicitude about half-seconds. I had taken up my pen again, and was about to commence that valuable chapter, when a Custom-house cutter under the window requested that I would hold a naval review of her, immediately.

It was impossible, under the circumstances, for any mental resolution, merely human, to dismiss the Custom-house cutter, because the shadow of her topmast fell upon my paper, and the vane played on the masterly blank chapter. I was therefore under the necessity of going to the other window; sitting astride of the chair there, like Napoleon bivouacking in the print; and inspecting the cutter as she lay, O! all that day, in the way of my chapter. She was rigged to carry a quantity of canvas, but her hull was so very small that four giants aboard of her (three men and a boy) who were vigilantly scraping at her, all together, inspired me with a terror lest they should scrape her away. A fifth giant, who appeared to consider himself "below"—as indeed he was, from the waist downwards—meditated, in such close proximity with the little gusty chimney-pipe, that he seemed to be smoking it. Several boys looked on from the wharf, and, when the gigantic attention appeared to be fully occupied, one or other of these would furtively swing himself in mid-air over the Custom-house cutter, by means of a line pendant from her rigging, like a young spirit of the storm. Presently, a sixth hand brought down two little water-casks; presently afterwards, a truck came, and delivered a hamper. I was now under an obligation to consider that the cutter was going on a cruise, and to wonder where she was going, and when she was going, and why she was going, and at what date she might be expected back, and who commanded her? With these pressing questions I was fully occupied when the Packet, making ready to go across, and blowing off her spare steam, roared, "Look at me!"

It became a positive duty to look at the Packet preparing to go across; aboard of which, the people newly come

down by the railroad were hurrying in a great fluster. The crew had got their tarry overalls on—and one knew what *that* meant—not to mention the white basins, ranged in neat little piles of a dozen each, behind the door of the after-cabin. One lady as I looked, one resigning and far-seeing woman, took her basin from the store of crockery, as she might have taken a refreshment-ticket, laid herself down on deck with that utensil at her ear, muffled her feet in one shawl, solemnly covered her countenance after the antique manner with another, and on the completion of these preparations appeared by the strength of her volition to become insensible. The mail-bags (O that I myself had the sea-legs of a mail-bag!) were tumbled aboard; the Packet left off roaring, warped out, and made at the white line upon the bar. One dip, one roll, one break of the sea over her bows, and Moore's Almanack or the sage Raphael could not have told me more of the state of things aboard, than I knew.

The famous chapter was all but begun now, and would have been quite begun, but for the wind. It was blowing stiffly from the east, and it rumbled in the chimney and shook the house. That was not much; but, looking out into the wind's grey eye for inspiration, I laid down my pen again to make the remark to myself, how emphatically everything by the sea declares that it has a great concern in the state of the wind. The trees blown all one way; the defences of the harbour reared highest and strongest against the raging point; the shingle flung up on the beach from the same direction; the number of arrows pointed at the common enemy; the sea tumbling in and rushing towards them as if it were inflamed by the sight. This put it in my head that I really ought to go out and take a walk in the wind; so, I gave up the magnificent chapter for that day, entirely persuading myself that I was under a moral obligation to have a blow.

I had a good one, and that on the high road—the very high road—on the top of the cliffs, where I met the stage-coach with all the outsides holding their hats on and themselves too, and overtook a flock of sheep with the wool about their necks blown into such great ruffs that they looked like fleecy owls. The wind played upon the light-house as if it were a great whistle, the spray was driven over the sea in a cloud of haze, the ships rolled and pitched

heavily, and at intervals long slants and flaws of light made mountain-steeps of communication between the ocean and the sky. A walk of ten miles brought me to a seaside town without a cliff, which, like the town I had come from, was out of the season too. Half of the houses were shut up; half of the other half were to let; the town might have done as much business as it was doing then, if it had been at the bottom of the sea. Nobody seemed to flourish save the attorney; his clerk's pen was going in the bow-window of his wooden house; his brass door-plate alone was free from salt, and had been polished up that morning. On the beach, among the rough luggers and capstans, groups of storm-beaten boatmen, like a sort of marine monsters, watched under the lee of those objects, or stood leaning forward against the wind, looking out through battered spy-glasses. The parlour bell in the Admiral Benbow had grown so flat with being out of the season, that neither could I hear it ring when I pulled the handle for lunch, nor could the young woman in black stockings and strong shoes, who acted as waiter out of the season, until it had been tinkled three times.

Admiral Benbow's cheese was out of the season, but his home-made bread was good, and his beer was perfect. Deluded by some earlier spring day which had been warm and sunny, the Admiral had cleared the firing out of his parlour stove, and had put some flower-pots in—which was amiable and hopeful in the Admiral, but not judicious: the room being, at that present visiting, transcendently cold. I therefore took the liberty of peeping out across a little stone passage into the Admiral's kitchen, and, seeing a high settle with its back towards me drawn out in front of the Admiral's kitchen fire, I strolled in, bread and cheese in hand, munching and looking about. One landsman and two boatmen were seated on the settle, smoking pipes and drinking beer out of thick pint crockery mugs—mugs peculiar to such places, with parti-coloured rings round them, and ornaments between the rings like frayed-out roots. The landsman was relating his experience, as yet only three nights old, of a fearful running-down case in the Channel, and therein presented to my imagination a sound of music that it will not soon forget.

"At that identical moment of time," said he (he was a prosy man by nature, who rose with his subject), "the

night being light and calm, but with a grey mist upon the water that didn't seem to spread for more than two or three mile, I was walking up and down the wooden causeway next the pier, off where it happened, along with a friend of mine, which his name is Mr. Clocker. Mr. Clocker is a grocer over yonder." (From the direction in which he pointed the bowl of his pipe, I might have judged Mr. Clocker to be a merman, established in a grocery trade in five-and-twenty fathoms of water.) "We were smoking our pipes, and walking up and down the causeway, talking of one thing and talking of another. We were quite alone there, except that a few hovellers" (the Kentish name for 'long-shore boatmen like his companions) "were hanging about their lugs, waiting while the tide made, as hovellers will." (One of the two boatmen, thoughtfully regarding me, shut up one eye; this I understood to mean: first, that he took me into the conversation: secondly, that he confirmed the proposition: thirdly, that he announced himself as a hoveller.) "All of a sudden Mr. Clocker and me stood rooted to the spot, by hearing a sound come through the stillness, right over the sea, *like a great sorrowful flute or Æolian harp.* We didn't in the least know what it was, and judge of our surprise when we saw the hovellers, to a man, leap into the boats and tear about to hoist sail and get off, as if they had every one of 'em gone, in a moment, raving mad! But *they* knew it was the cry of distress from the sinking emigrant ship."

When I got back to my watering-place out of the season, and had done my twenty miles in good style, I found that the celebrated Black Mesmerist intended favouring the public that evening in the Hall of the Muses, which he had engaged for the purpose. After a good dinner, seated by the fire in an easy chair, I began to waver in a design I had formed of waiting on the Black Mesmerist, and to incline towards the expediency of remaining where I was. Indeed a point of gallantry was involved in my doing so, inasmuch as I had not left France alone, but had come from the prisons of St. Pélagie with my distinguished and unfortunate friend Madame Roland (in two volumes which I bought for two francs each, at the bookstall in the Place de la Concorde, Paris, at the corner of the Rue Royale). Deciding to pass the evening tête-à-tête with Madame Roland, I derived, as I always do, great pleasure from that

spiritual woman's society, and the charms of her brave soul and engaging conversation. I must confess that if she had only some more faults, only a few more passionate failings of any kind, I might love her better; but I am content to believe that the deficiency is in me, and not in her. We spent some sadly interesting hours together on this occasion, and she told me again of her cruel discharge from the Abbaye, and of her being rearrested before her free feet had sprung lightly up half-a-dozen steps of her own staircase, and carried to the prison which she only left for the guillotine.

Madame Roland and I took leave of one another before midnight, and I went to bed full of vast intentions for next day, in connection with the unparalleled chapter. To hear the foreign mail-steamers coming in at dawn of day, and to know that I was not aboard or obliged to get up, was very comfortable; so, I rose for the chapter in great force.

I had advanced so far as to sit down at my window again on my second morning, and to write the first half-line of the chapter and strike it out, not liking it, when my conscience reproached me with not having surveyed the watering-place out of the season, after all, yesterday, but with having gone straight out of it at the rate of four miles and a half an hour. Obviously the best amends that I could make for this remissness was to go and look at it without another moment's delay. So—altogether as a matter of duty—I gave up the magnificent chapter for another day, and sauntered out with my hands in my pockets.

All the houses and lodgings ever let to visitors were to let that morning. It seemed to have snowed bills with To Let upon them. This put me upon thinking what the owners of all those apartments did, out of the season; how they employed their time, and occupied their minds. They could not be always going to the Methodist chapels, of which I passed one every other minute. They must have some other recreation. Whether they pretended to take one another's lodgings, and opened one another's tea-caddies in fun? Whether they cut slices off their own beef and mutton, and made believe that it belonged to somebody else? Whether they played little dramas of life, as children do, and said, "I ought to come and look at your apartments, and you ought to ask two guineas a week too

much, and then I ought to say I must have the rest of the day to think of it, and then you ought to say that another lady and gentleman with no children in family had made an offer very close to your own terms, and you had passed your word to give them a positive answer in half-an-hour, and indeed were just going to take the bill down when you heard the knock, and then I ought to take them you know?" Twenty such speculations engaged my thoughts. Then, after passing, still clinging to the walls, defaced rags of the bills of last year's Circus, I came to a back field near a timber-yard where the Circus itself had been, and there was yet a sort of monkish tonsure on the grass, indicating the spot where the young lady had gone round upon her pet steed Firefly in her daring flight. Turning into the town again, I came among the shops, and they were emphatically out of the season. The chemist had no boxes of ginger-beer powders, no beautifying sea-side soaps and washes, no attractive scents; nothing but his great goggle-eyed red bottles, looking as if the winds of winter and the drift of the salt-sea had inflamed them. The grocers' hot pickles, Harvey's Sauce, Doctor Kitchener's Zest, Anchovy Paste, Dundee Marmalade, and the whole stock of luxurious helps to appetite, were hibernating somewhere underground. The china-shop had no trifles from anywhere. The Bazaar had given in altogether, and presented a notice on the shutters that this establishment would reopen at Whitsuntide, and that the proprietor in the meantime might be heard of at Wild Lodge, East Cliff. At the Sea-bathing Establishment, a row of neat little wooden houses seven or eight feet high, I *saw* the proprietor in bed in the shower-bath. As to the bathing-machines, they were (how they got there, is not for me to say) at the top of a hill at least a mile and a half off. The library, which I had never seen otherwise than wide open, was tight shut; and two peevish bald old gentlemen seemed to be hermetically sealed up inside, eternally reading the paper. That wonderful mystery, the music-shop, carried it off as usual (except that it had more cabinet pianos in stock), as if season or no season were all one to it. It made the same prodigious display of bright brazen wind-instruments, horribly twisted, worth, as I should conceive, some thousands of pounds, and which it is utterly impossible that anybody in any season can ever play or want to play. It had five tri-

angles in the window, six pairs of castanets, and three harps; likewise every polka with a coloured frontispiece that ever was published; from the original one where a smooth male and female Pole of high rank are coming at the observer with their arms akimbo, to the Ratcatcher's Daughter. Astonishing establishment, amazing enigma! Three other shops were pretty much out of the season, what they were used to be in it. First, the shop where they sell the sailors' watches, which had still the old collection of enormous timekeepers, apparently designed to break a fall from the masthead: with places to wind them up, like fire-plugs. Secondly, the shop where they sell the sailors' clothing, which displayed the old sou'-westers, and the old oily suits, and the old pea-jackets, and the old one sea-chest, with its handles like a pair of rope ear-rings. Thirdly, the unchangeable shop for the sale of literature that has been left behind. Here, Dr. Faustus was still going down to very red and yellow perdition, under the superintendence of three green personages of a scaly humour, with excrescential serpents growing out of their blade-bones. Here, the Golden Dreamer, and the Norwood Fortune Teller, were still on sale at sixpence each, with instructions for making the dumb cake, and reading destinies in tea-cups, and with a picture of a young woman with a high waist lying on a sofa in an attitude so uncomfortable as almost to account for her dreaming at one and the same time of a conflagration, a shipwreck, an earthquake, a skeleton, a church-porch, lightning, funerals performed, and a young man in a bright blue coat and canary pantaloons. Here, were Little Warblers and Fairburn's Comic Songsters. Here, too, were ballads on the old ballad paper and in the old confusion of types; with an old man in a cocked hat, and an arm-chair, for the illustration to Will Watch the Bold Smuggler; and the Friar of Orders Grey, represented by a little girl in a hoop, with a ship in the distance. All these as of yore, when they were infinite delights to me!

It took me so long fully to relish these many enjoyments that I had not more than an hour before bedtime to devote to Madame Roland. We got on admirably together on the subject of her convent education, and I rose next morning with the full conviction that the day for the great chapter was at last arrived.

It had fallen calm, however, in the night, and as I sat at breakfast I blushed to remember that I had not yet been on the Downs. I a walker, and not yet on the Downs! Really, on so quiet and bright a morning this must be set right. As an essential part of the Whole Duty of Man, therefore, I left the chapter to itself—for the present—and went on the Downs. They were wonderfully green and beautiful, and gave me a good deal to do. When I had done with the free air and the view, I had to go down into the valley and look after the hops (which I know nothing about), and to be equally solicitous as to the cherry orchards. Then I took it on myself to cross-examine a tramping family in black (mother alleged, I have no doubt by herself in person, to have died last week), and to accompany eighteen-pence which produced a great effect, with moral admonitions which produced none at all. Finally, it was late in the afternoon before I got back to the unprecedented chapter, and then I determined that it was out of the season, as the place was, and put it away.

I went at night to the benefit of Mrs. B. Wedgington at the Theatre, who had placarded the town with the admonition, "DON'T FORGET IT!" I made the house, according to my calculation, four and ninepence to begin with, and it may have warmed up, in the course of the evening, to half-a-sovereign. There was nothing to offend any one—the good Mr. Baines of Leeds excepted. Mrs. B. Wedgington sang to a grand piano. Mr. B. Wedgington did the like, and also took off his coat, tucked up his trousers, and danced in clogs. Master B. Wedgington, aged ten months, was nursed by a shivering young person in the boxes, and the eye of Mrs. B. Wedgington wandered that way more than once. Peace be with all the Wedgingtons from A. to Z. May they find themselves in the Season somewhere!

*DOUGLAS JERROLD.

THE different aspects assumed by the variety of subjects which find their way, week by week, into the columns of this Journal, seem, not unnaturally, to have a certain analogy with the different aspects under which a variety of visitors make their appearance at a hospitable house. There is the subject which presents itself formally, in full dress, and on grand occasions only. There is the subject which comes more readily, at shorter notice, and at more ordinary times and seasons. There is the subject which is in itself of no particular account, but which may sometimes be found useful, at the eleventh hour, to fill up a vacant place. Last, and most precious of all, there is the happy subject which comes unbidden to the pen, and which ensures its own loving reception almost as rare in its way as the home-friend who comes unbidden to the house, and brings his welcome with him, visit us as often as he may.

The well-known name at the head of this article appears there as happily and as appropriately as the well-loved friend appears at the fireside. Foremost among the subjects which it is a happiness and not a duty to welcome, rank the Life and Labours of *Douglas Jerrold*. Under the guidance of Mr. Blanchard Jerrold (whose excellent Memoir of his father is now before us), we propose to trace the outline of that Life, and to indicate in some degree the nature of those Labours; referring our readers to the book itself for all the details which cannot find a place here, and which assist in completing the interest of the biographical story.

Some seventy years ago, there lived a poor country player named Samuel Jerrold. His principal claim to a prominent position among the strolling company to which he was attached consisted in the possession of a pair of shoes once belonging to the great Garrick himself. Samuel Jerrold always appeared on the stage in these invaluable "properties"—a man, surely, who deserves the regard of posterity, as the only actor of modern times who has shown himself capable of standing in Garrick's shoes.

Samuel Jerrold was twice married—the second time to a wife so much his junior that he was older than his own mother-in-law. Partly, perhaps, in virtue of this last great advantage on the part of the husband, the marriage was a very happy one. The second Mrs. Samuel was a clever, good-tempered, notable woman; and helped her husband materially in his theatrical affairs, when he rose in time (and in Garrick's shoes) to be a manager of country theatres. Young Mrs. Samuel brought her husband a family—two girls to begin with, and, on the third of January, eighteen hundred and three, while she was staying in London, a boy, who was christened Douglas William, and who was destined, in after life, to make the name of the obscure country manager a household word on the lips of English readers.

In the year eighteen hundred and seven, Samuel Jerrold became the lessee of the Sheerness Theatre; and little Douglas was there turned to professional account, as a stage-child. He appeared in *The Stranger* as one of the little cherubs of the frail and interesting Mrs. Haller; and he was "carried on" by Edmund Kean, as the child in *Rolla*. These early theatrical experiences (whatever influence they might have had, at a later time, in forming his instincts as a dramatist) do not appear to have at all inclined him towards his father's profession when he grew older. The world of ships and sailors amid which he lived at Sheerness seems to have formed his first tastes and influenced his first longings. As soon as he could speak for himself on the matter of his future prospects, he chose the life of a sailor; and, at ten years old, he entered on board the guardship, Namur, as a first-class volunteer.

Up to this time the father had given the son as good an education as it lay within his means to command. Douglas had been noted as a studious boy at school; and he brought with him a taste for reading and for quiet pursuits when he entered on board the Namur. Beginning his apprenticeship to the sea as a Midshipman, in December, eighteen hundred and thirteen, he was not transferred from the guardship to active service until April, eighteen hundred and fifteen, when he was drafted off, with forty-six men, to his Majesty's gun-brig, Ernest.

Those were stirring times. The fierce struggle of Waterloo was at hand; and Douglas's first cruise was across the

Channel to Ostend, at the head of a fleet of transports carrying troops and stores to the battle-field. Singularly enough his last cruise connected him with the results of the great fight, as his first had connected him with the preparations for it. In the July of the Waterloo year, the Ernest brought her share of the wounded back to Sheerness. On the deck of that brig, Jerrold first stood face to face with the horror of war. In after life, when other pens were writing glibly enough of the glory of war, his pen traced the dark reverse of the picture, and set the terrible consequences of all victories, righteous as well as wicked, in their true light.

The great peace was proclaimed, and the nations rested at last. In October, eighteen hundred and fifteen, the Ernest was "paid off." Jerrold stepped on shore, and never returned to the service. He was without interest; and the peace virtually closed his professional prospects. To the last day of his life he had a genuinely English love for the sea and sailors; and, short as his naval experience had been, neither he nor his countrymen were altogether losers by it. If the Midshipman of the Ernest had risen to be an Admiral, what would have become then of the author of Black-Eyed Susan?

Douglas's prospects were far from cheering when he returned to his home on shore. The affairs of Samuel Jerrold (through no fault of his own) had fallen into sad confusion. In his old age, his vocation of manager sank from under him; his theatre was sold; and, at the end of the Waterloo year, he and his family found themselves compelled to leave Sheerness. On the first day of eighteen hundred and sixteen they sailed away in the Chatham boat to try their fortune in London.

The first refuge of the Jerrolds was at Broad Court, Bow Street. Poor old Samuel was now past his work; and the chief dependence of the ruined family rested on Douglas and his mother. Mrs. Samuel contrived to get some theatrical employment in London; and Douglas, after beginning life as an officer in the navy, was apprenticed to a printer, in Northumberland Street, Strand.

He accepted his new position with admirable cheerfulness and resolution; honestly earning his money, and affectionately devoting it to the necessities of his parents. A delightful anecdote of him, at this time of his life, is told

by his son. On one of the occasions when his mother and sister were absent in the country, the little domestic responsibility of comforting the poor worn-out old father with a good dinner rested on Douglas's shoulders. With the small proceeds of his work, he bought all the necessary materials for a good beefsteak pie—made the pie himself, succeeding brilliantly with the crust—himself took it to the bake-house—and himself brought it back, with one of Sir Walter Scott's novels, which the dinner left him just money enough to hire from a library, for the purpose of reading a story to his father in the evening, by way of dessert. For our own parts we shall henceforth always rank that beefsteak pie as one among the many other works of Douglas Jerrold which have established his claim to remembrance and to regard. The clue to the bright, affectionate nature of the man—sometimes lost by those who knew him imperfectly, in after life—could hardly be found in any pleasanter or better place, now that he is gone from among us, than on the poor dinner table in Broad Court.

Although he was occupied for twelve hours out of the twenty-four at the printing-office, he contrived to steal time enough from the few idle intervals allowed for rest and meals, to store his mind with all the reading that lay within his reach. As early as at the age of fourteen, the literary faculty that was in him seems to have struggled to develop itself in short papers and scraps of verse. Only a year later, he made his first effort at dramatic composition, producing a little farce, with a part in it for an old friend of the family, the late Mr. Wilkinson, the comedian. Although Samuel Jerrold was well remembered among many London actors as an honest country manager; and although Douglas could easily secure from his father's friends his admission to the theatre whenever he was able to go to it, he does not appear to have possessed interest enough to gain a reading for his piece when it was first sent in to the English Opera House. After three years had elapsed, however, Mr. Wilkinson contrived to get the lad's farce produced at Sadler's Wells, under the title of *More Frightened than Hurt*. It was not only successful on its first representation, but it also won the rare honour of being translated for the French stage. More than this, it was afterwards translated back again, by a dramatist who was ignorant of its original history, for the stage of the Olympic

Theatre; where it figured in the bills under the new title of *Fighting by Proxy*, with Liston in the part of the hero. Such is the history of Douglas Jerrold's first contribution to the English drama. When it was produced on the boards of Sadler's Wells, its author's age was eighteen years.

He had appeared in public, however, as an author before this time; having composed some verses which were printed in a forgotten periodical called "Arliss's Magazine." The loss of his first situation, through the bankruptcy of his master, obliged him to seek employment anew in the printing-office of one Mr. Bigg, who was also the editor of a newspaper called the "Sunday Monitor." In this journal appeared his first article—a critical paper on *Der Freischütz*. He had gone to the theatre with an order to see the opera; and had been so struck by the super-natural drama and the wonderful music to which it was set, that he noted down his impressions of the performance, and afterwards dropped what he had written, anonymously, into the editor's box. The next morning, his own article was handed to him to set up in type for the forthcoming number of the Sunday Monitor. After this first encouragement, he began to use his pen frequently in the minor periodicals of the time; still sticking to the printer's work, however, and still living at home with his family. The success of his little farce at Sadler's Wells led to his writing three more pieces for that theatre. They all succeeded; and the managers of some of the other minor theatres began to look after the new man. Just at this time, when his career as dramatist and journalist was beginning to open before him, his father died. After that loss, the next important event in his life was his marriage. In the year eighteen hundred and twenty four, when he was twenty-one years of age, he married his "first love," Miss Mary Swann, the daughter of a gentleman who held an appointment in the Post Office. He and his bride settled, with his mother and sister and a kind old friend of his boyish days, in Holborn; and here—devoting his days to the newspapers, and his evenings to the drama—the newly married man started as author by profession, and met the world and its cares bravely at the point of the pen.

The struggle at starting was a hard one. His principal permanent source of income was a small weekly salary, paid to him as dramatist to the establishment, by one Da-

vidge, manager of the Coburg (now the Victoria) Theatre. This man appears to have treated Jerrold, whose dramas brought both money and reputation to his theatre, with an utter want of common consideration and common gratitude. He worked his poor author pitilessly; and it is, on that account, highly satisfactory to know that he over-reached himself in the end, by quarrelling with his dramatist, at the very time when Jerrold had a theatrical fortune (so far as managers' interests were concerned) lying in his desk, in the shape of *Black-Eyed Susan*. With that renowned play (the most popular of all nautical dramas) in his hand, Douglas left the Coburg to seek employment at the Surrey Theatre—then under the management of the drunken and dignified Mr. Elliston. This last tradesman in plays—who subsequently showed himself to be as meanly unfeeling as the other tradesman at the Coburg—bid rather higher for Jerrold's services, and estimated the sole monopoly of the fancy, invention and humour of a man who had already proved himself to be a popular, money-bringing dramatist, at the magnificent rate of five pounds a week. The bargain was struck; and Jerrold's first play produced at the Surrey Theatre was *Black-Eyed Susan*.

He had achieved many enviable dramatic successes before this time. He had written domestic dramas—such as *Fifteen Years of a Drunkard's Life* and *Ambrose Gwinett*, the popularity of which is still well remembered by play-goers of the old generation. But the reception of *Black-Eyed Susan* eclipsed all previous successes of his or of any other dramatist's in that line. Mr. T. P. Cooke, who, as the French say, "created" the part of William, not only found half London flocking into the Borough to see him, but was actually called upon, after acting in the play, as a first piece, at the Surrey Theatre, to drive off in his sailor's dress, and act in it again on the same night, as the last piece, at Covent Garden Theatre. Its first "run" mounted to three hundred nights: it afterwards drew money into the empty treasury of Drury Lane: it remains, to this day, a "stock-piece" on which managers and actors know that they can depend; and, strangest phenomenon of all, it is impossible to see the play now, without feeling that its great and well-deserved dramatic success has been obtained with the least possible amount of assistance from the subtleties and refinements of dramatic art. The piece

is indebted for its hold on the public sympathy solely to the simple force, the irresistible directness, of its appeal to some of the strongest affections in our nature. It has succeeded, and it will succeed, not because the dialogue is well or, as to some passages of it, even naturally written; not because the story is neatly told, for it is (especially in the first act) full of faults in construction; but solely because the situations in which the characters are placed appeal to the hearts of every husband and every wife in the theatre. In this aspect of it, and in this only, the play is a study to any young writer; for it shows on what amazingly simple foundations rest the main conditions of the longest, the surest, and the widest dramatic success.

It is sad, it is almost humiliating, to be obliged to add, in reference to the early history of Jerrold's first dramatic triumph, that his share of the gains which *Black-Eyed Susan* poured into the pockets of managers on both sides of the water was just seventy pounds. Mean-minded Mr. Elliston, whose theatre the play had raised from a state of something like bankruptcy to a condition of prosperity which, in the Surrey annals, has not since been paralleled, not only abstained from presenting Jerrold with the smallest fragment of anything in the shape of a token of gratitude, but actually had the pitiless insolence to say to him, after *Black-Eyed Susan* had run its three hundred nights, "My dear boy, why don't you get your friends to present you with a bit of plate?"

The extraordinary success of *Black-Eyed Susan* opened the doors of the great theatres to Jerrold, as a matter of course. He made admirable use of the chances in his favour which he had so well deserved, and for which he had waited so long. At the Adelphi, at Drury Lane, and the Haymarket, drama after drama flowed in quick succession from his pen. *The Devil's Ducat*, *The Bride of Ludgate*, *The Rent Day*, *Nell Gwynne*, *the Housekeeper*—this last, the best of his plays in point of construction—date, with many other dramatic works, from the period of his life now under review. The one slight check to his career of prosperity occurred in eighteen hundred and thirty-six, when he and his brother-in-law took the Strand Theatre and when Jerrold acted a character in one of his own plays. Neither the theatrical speculation nor the theatrical appearance proved to be successful; and he wisely abandoned,

from that time, all professional connection with the stage, except in his old and ever welcome character of dramatist. In the other branches of his art—to which he devoted himself, at this turning-point of his career, as faithfully as he devoted himself to the theatrical branch—his progress was not less remarkable. As journalist and essayist, he rose steadily, towards the distinguished place which was his due among the writers of his time. This middle term of his literary exertions produced, among other noticeable results, the series of social studies called "Men of Character," originally begun in Blackwood's Magazine, and since published among his collected works.

He had now advanced, in a social as well as in a literary point of view, beyond that period in the lives of self-made men which may be termed the adventurous period. Whatever difficulties and anxieties henceforth oppressed him were caused by the trials and troubles which, more or less, beset the exceptional lives of all men of letters. The struggle for a hearing, the fight for a fair field in which to show himself, had now been bravely and creditably accomplished; and all that remains to be related of the life of Douglas Jerrold is best told in the history of his works.

Taking his peculiar literary gifts into consideration, the first great opportunity of his life, as a periodical writer, was offered to him, unquestionably, by the starting of Punch. The brilliant impromptu faculty which gave him a place apart, as thinker, writer, and talker, among the remarkable men of his time, was exactly the faculty which such a journal as Punch was calculated to develop to the utmost. The day on which Jerrold was secured as a contributor would have been a fortunate day for that periodical, if he had written nothing in it but the far-famed Candle Lectures, and the delightful Story of a Feather. But the service that he rendered to Punch must by no means be associated only with the more elaborate contributions to its pages which are publicly connected with his name. His wit often flashed out at its brightest, his sarcasm often cut with its keenest edge, in those well-timed paragraphs and short articles which hit the passing event of the day, and which, so far as their temporary purpose with the public is concerned, are all-important ingredients in the success of such a periodical as Punch. A contributor who can strike out new ideas from the original re-

sources of his own mind, is one man, and a contributor who can be depended on for the small work-a-day emergencies which are felt one week and forgotten the next, is generally another. Jerrold united these two characters in himself; and the value of him to Punch, on that account only, can never be too highly estimated.

At this period of his life, the fertility of his mental resources showed itself most conspicuously. While he was working for Punch he was also editing and largely contributing to the Illuminated Magazine. In this publication appeared, among a host of shorter papers, the series called "The Chronicles of Clovernook," which he himself always considered to be one of his happiest efforts, and which does indeed contain, in detached passages, some of the best things that ever fell from his pen. On the cessation of The Illuminated Magazine, he started The Shilling Magazine, and contributed to it his well-known novel, Saint Giles and Saint James. These accumulated literary occupations and responsibilities would have been enough for most men; but Jerrold's inexhaustible energy and variety carried him on through more work still. Theatrical audiences now found their old favourite addressing them again, and occupying new ground as a writer of five-act and three-act comedies. *Bubbles of the Day*, *Time Works Wonders*, *The Catspaw*, *Retired from Business*, *Saint Cupid*, were all produced, with other plays, after the period when he became a regular writer in Punch. Judged from the literary point of view, these comedies were all original and striking contributions to the library of the stage. From the dramatic point of view, however, it must not be concealed that they were less satisfactory: and that some of them were scarcely so successful with audiences as their author's earlier and humbler efforts. The one solid critical reason which it is possible to assign for this implies in itself a compliment which could be paid to no other dramatist of modern times. The perpetual glitter of Jerrold's wit seems to have blinded him to some of the more sober requirements of the dramatic art. When Charles Kemble said, and said truly, that there was wit enough for three comedies in *Bubbles of the Day*, he implied that this brilliant overflow left little or no room for the indispensable resources of story and situation to display themselves fairly on the stage. The comedies themselves, examined with reference to their success in

representation, as well as to their intrinsic merits, help to support this view. *Time Works Wonders* was the most prosperous of all, and it is that comedy precisely which has the most story and the most situation in it. The idea and the management of the charming love-tale out of which the events of this play spring, show what Jerrold might have achieved in the construction of other plots, if his own superabundant wit had not dazzled him and led him astray. As it is, the readers of these comedies, who can appreciate the rich fancy, the delicate subtleties of thought, the masterly terseness of expression, and the exquisite play and sparkle of wit scattered over every page, may rest assured that they rather gain than lose—especially in the present condition of theatrical companies—by not seeing the last dramatic works of Douglas Jerrold represented on the stage.

The next, and, sad to say, the final achievement of his life, connected him most honourably and profitably with the newspaper press. Many of our readers will remember the starting of Douglas Jerrold's Weekly Newspaper—its great temporary success—and then its sudden decline, through defects in management, to which it is not now necessary to refer at length. The signal ability with which the editorial articles in the paper were written, the remarkable aptitude which they displayed in striking straight at the sympathies of large masses of readers, did not escape the notice of men who were well fitted to judge of the more solid qualifications which go to the production of a popular journalist. In the spring of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-two, the proprietor of Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper proposed the editorship to Jerrold, on terms of such wise liberality as to ensure the ready acceptance of his offer. From the spring of eighteen hundred and fifty-two, to the spring of eighteen hundred and fifty-seven—the last he was ever to see—Jerrold conducted the paper with such extraordinary success as is rare in the history of journalism. Under his supervision, and with the regular assistance of his pen, Lloyd's Newspaper rose, by thousands and thousands a week, to the great circulation which it now enjoys. Of the many successful labours of Jerrold's life none had been so substantially prosperous as the labour that was destined to close it.

His health had shown signs of breaking, and his heart was known to be affected, for some little time before his last

brief illness: but the unconquerable energy and spirit of the man upheld him through all bodily trials, until the first day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-seven. Even his medical attendant did not abandon all hope when his strength first gave way. But he sank rapidly—so rapidly, that in one short week the struggle was over. On the eighth day of June, surrounded by his family and his friends, preserving all his faculties to the last, passing away calmly, resignedly, affectionately, Douglas Jerrold closed his eyes on the world, which it had been the long and noble purpose of his life to inform and to improve.

It is too early yet to attempt any estimate of the place which his writings will ultimately occupy in English literature. So long as honesty, energy, and variety are held to be the prominent qualities which should distinguish a genuine writer, there can be no doubt of the vitality of Douglas Jerrold's reputation. The one objection urged against the works, which, feeble and ignorant though it was, often went to the heart of the writer, was the objection of bitterness. Calling to mind many of the passages in his books in which this bitterness most sharply appears, and seeing plainly in those passages what the cause was that provoked it, we venture to speak out our own opinion boldly, and to acknowledge at once, that we admire this so-called bitterness as one of the great and valuable qualities of Douglas Jerrold's writings; because we can see for ourselves that it springs from the uncompromising earnestness and honesty of the author. In an age when it is becoming unfashionable to have a positive opinion about anything; when the detestable comic element scatters its profanation with impunity on all beautiful and all serious things; when much, far too much, of the current literature of the day vibrates contemptibly between unbelieving banter and unblushing clap-trap, that element of bitterness in Jerrold's writings —which never stands alone in them; which is never disassociated from the kind word that goes before, or the generous thought that comes after it—is in our opinion a right wholesome element, breathing that manful admiration of truth, and that manful hatred of falsehood, which is the chiefest and brightest jewel in the crown of any writer, living or dead.

This same cry of bitterness, which assailed him in his literary character, assailed him in his social character also.

Absurd as the bare idea of bitterness must appear in connection with such a nature as his, to those who really knew him, the reason why strangers so often and so ridiculously misunderstood him, is not difficult to discover. That marvellous brightness and quickness of perception which has distinguished him far and wide as the sayer of some of the wittiest, and often some of the wisest things also, in the English language, expressed itself almost with the suddenness of lightning. This absence of all appearance of artifice or preparation, this flash and readiness which made the great charm of his wit, rendered him, at the same time, quite incapable of suppressing a good thing from prudential considerations. It sparkled off his tongue before he was aware of it. It was always a bright surprise to himself; and it never occurred to him that it could be anything but a bright surprise to others. All his so-called bitter things were said with a burst of hearty, schoolboy laughter, which showed how far he was himself from attaching a serious importance to them. Strangers apparently failed to draw this inference, plain as it was; and often mistook him accordingly. If they had seen him in the society of children; if they had surprised him in the house of any one of his literary brethren who was in difficulty and distress; if they had met him by the bedside of a sick friend, how simply and how irresistibly the gentle, generous, affectionate nature of the man would then have disclosed itself to the most careless chance acquaintance who ever misunderstood him! Very few men have won the loving regard of so many friends so rapidly, and have kept that regard so enduringly to the last day of their lives, as Douglas Jerrold.

In closing this brief sketch of the career of a dear and an honoured fellow-labourer, we must not forget to say a farewell word of sincere congratulation to Mr. Blanchard Jerrold, on the admirable spirit in which he has given his father's Life to the world. The book is most frankly, most affectionately, and, as to its closing passages, most touchingly written. It is good as the record of a literary life; it is still better as a tribute to the memory of a father, offered by the love and duty of a son.

*LEIGH HUNT.

"The sense of beauty and gentleness, of moral beauty and faithful gentleness, grew upon him as the clear evening closed in. When he went to visit his relative at Putney, he still carried with him his work, and the books he more immediately wanted. Although his bodily powers had been giving way, his most conspicuous qualities, his memory for books and his affection, remained, and when his hair was white, when his ample chest had grown slender, when the very proportion of his height had visibly lessened, his step was still ready, and his dark eyes brightened at every happy expression, and every thought of kindness. His death was simply exhaustion: he broke off his work to lie down and repose. So gentle was the final approach, that he scarcely recognised it till the very last, and then it came without terrors. His physical suffering had not been severe; at the latest hour he said that his only uneasiness was failing breath. And that failing breath was used to express his sense of the inexhaustible kindness he had received from the family who had been so unexpectedly made his nurses,—to draw from one of his sons, by minute, eager, and searching questions, all that he could learn about the latest vicissitudes and growing hopes of Italy—to ask the friends and children around him for news of those whom he loved,—and to send love and messages to the absent who loved him."

Thus, with a manly simplicity and filial affection, writes the eldest son of Leigh Hunt in recording his father's death. These are the closing words of a new edition of The Autobiography of Leigh Hunt, published by Messrs. Smith and Elder, of Cornhill, revised by that son, and enriched with an introductory chapter of remarkable beauty and tenderness. The son's first presentation of his father to the reader, "rather tall, straight as an arrow, looking slenderer than he really was; his hair black and shining, and slightly inclined to wave; his head high, his forehead straight and white, his eyes black and sparkling, his general complexion dark; in his whole carriage and manner an extraordinary degree of life," completes the picture. It is

the picture of the flourishing and fading away of man that is born of a woman and hath but a short time to live.

In his presentation of his father's moral nature and intellectual qualities, Mr. Hunt is no less faithful and no less touching. Those who knew Leigh Hunt, will see the bright face and hear the musical voice again, when he is recalled to them in this passage: "Even at seasons of the greatest depression in his fortunes, he always attracted many visitors, but still not so much for any repute that attended him as for his personal qualities. Few were more attractive in society, whether in a large company or over the fireside. His manners were peculiarly animated; his conversation, varied, ranging over a great field of subjects, was moved and called forth by the response of his companion, be that companion philosopher or student, sage or boy, man or woman; and he was equally ready for the most lively topics or for the gravest reflections—his expression easily adapting itself to the tone of his companion's mind. With much freedom of manners, he combined a spontaneous courtesy that never failed, and a considerateness derived from a ceaseless kindness of heart that invariably fascinated even strangers." Or in this: "His animation, his sympathy with what was gay and pleasurable; his avowed doctrine of cultivating cheerfulness, were manifest on the surface, and could be appreciated by those who knew him in society, most probably even exaggerated as salient traits, on which he himself insisted *with a sort of gay and ostentatious wilfulness.*"

The last words describe one of the most captivating peculiarities of a most original and engaging man, better than any other words could. The reader is besought to observe them, for a reason that shall presently be given. Lastly: "The anxiety to recognise the right of others, the tendency to 'refine,' which was noted by an early school companion, and the propensity to elaborate every thought, made him, along with the direct argument by which he sustained his own conviction, recognise and almost admit all that might be said on the opposite side." For these reasons, and for others suggested with equal felicity, and with equal fidelity, the son writes of the father, "It is most desirable that his qualities should be known as they were; for such deficiencies as he had are the honest explanation of his mistakes; while, as the reader may see from his

writing and his conduct, they are not, as the faults of which he was accused would be, incompatible with the noblest faculties both of head and heart. To know Leigh Hunt as he was, was to hold him in reverence and love."

These quotations are made here, with a special object. It is not, that the personal testimony of one who knew Leigh Hunt well, may be borne to their truthfulness. It is not, that it may be recorded in these pages, as in his son's introductory chapter, that his life was of the most amiable and domestic kind, that his wants were few, that his way of life was frugal, that he was a man of small expenses, no ostentations, a diligent labourer, and a secluded man of letters. It is not, that the inconsiderate and forgetful may be reminded of his wrongs and sufferings in the days of the Regency, and of the national disgrace of his imprisonment. It is not, that their forbearance may be entreated for his grave, in right of his graceful fancy or his political labours and endurances, though

> Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
> New men, that in the flying of a wheel
> Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
> Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well.

It is, that a duty may be done in the most direct way possible. An act of plain, clear duty.

Four or five years ago, the writer of these lines was much pained by accidentally encountering a printed statement, "that Mr. Leigh Hunt was the original of Harold Skimpole in Bleak House." The writer of these lines is the author of that book. The statement came from America. It is no disrespect to that country, in which the writer has, perhaps, as many friends and as true an interest as any man that lives, good-humouredly to state the fact, that he has, now and then, been the subject of paragraphs in Transatlantic newspapers, more surprisingly destitute of all foundations in truth than the wildest delusions of the wildest lunatics. For reasons born of this experience, he let the thing go by.

But, since Mr. Leigh Hunt's death, the statement has been revived in England. The delicacy and generosity evinced in its revival, are for the rather late consideration of its revivers. The fact is this:

Exactly those graces and charms of manner which are

remembered in the words we have quoted, were remembered by the author of the work of fiction in question, when he drew the character in question. Above all other things, that "sort of gay and ostentatious wilfulness" in the humouring of a subject, which had many a time delighted him, and impressed him as being unspeakably whimsical and attractive, was the airy quality he wanted for the man he invented. Partly for this reason, and partly (he has since often grieved to think) for the pleasure it afforded him to find that delightful manner reproducing itself under his hand, he yielded to the temptation of too often making the character *speak* like his old friend. He no more thought, God forgive him! that the admired original would ever be charged with the imaginary vices of the fictitious creature, than he has himself ever thought of charging the blood of Desdemona and Othello on the innocent Academy model who sat for Iago's leg in the picture. Even as to the mere occasional manner, he meant to be so cautious and conscientious, that he privately referred the proof sheets of the first number of that book to two intimate literary friends of Leigh Hunt (both still living), and altered the whole of that part of the text on their discovering too strong a resemblance to his "way."

He cannot see the son lay this wreath on the father's tomb, and leave him to the possibility of ever thinking that the present words might have righted the father's memory and were left unwritten. He cannot know that his own son may have to explain his father when folly or malice can wound his heart no more, and leave this task undone.

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*THE LATE MR. STANFIELD.

Every Artist, be he writer, painter, musician, or actor, must bear his private sorrows as he best can, and must separate them from the exercise of his public pursuit. But it sometimes happens, in compensation, that his private loss of a dear friend represents a loss on the part of the whole community. Then he may, without obtrusion of his individuality, step forth to lay his little wreath upon that dear friend's grave.

On Saturday, the eighteenth of this present month, CLARKSON STANFIELD died. On the afternoon of that day, England lost the great marine painter of whom she will be boastful ages hence; the National Historian of her specialty the Sea; the man famous in all countries for his marvellous rendering of the waves that break upon her shores, of her ships and seamen, of her coasts and skies, of her storms and sunshine, of the many marvels of the deep. He who holds the oceans in the hollow of His hand, had given, associated with them, wonderful gifts into his keeping; he had used them well through three score and fourteen years; and, on the afternoon of that spring day, relinquished them forever.

It is superfluous to record that the painter of "The Battle of Trafalgar," of "The Victory being towed into Gibraltar with the Body of Nelson on Board," of "The Morning after the Wreck," of "The Abandoned," of fifty more such works, died in his seventy-fourth year, "Mr." Stanfield. —He was an Englishman.

Those grand pictures will proclaim his powers while paint and canvas last. But the writer of these words had been his friend for thirty years; and when, a short week or two before his death, he laid that once so skilful hand upon the writer's breast and told him they would meet again, "but not here," the thoughts of the latter turned, for the time, so little to his noble genius, and so much to his noble nature.

He was the soul of frankness, generosity, and simplicity. The most genial, the most affectionate, the most loving, and the most lovable of men. Success had never for an instant spoiled him. His interest in the Theatre as an Institution—the best picturesqueness of which may be said to be wholly due to him—was faithful to the last. His belief in a Play, his delight in one, the ease with which it moved him to tears or to laughter, were most remarkable evidences of the heart he must have put into his old theatrical work, and of the thorough purpose and sincerity with which it must have been done. The writer was very intimately associated with him in some amateur plays; and day after day, and night after night, there were the same unquenchable freshness, enthusiasm, and impressibility in him, though broken in health, even then.

No Artist can ever have stood by his art with a quieter

dignity than he always did. Nothing would have induced him to lay it at the feet of any human creature. To fawn, or to toady, or to do undeserved homage to any one, was an absolute impossibility with him. And yet his character was so nicely balanced that he was the last man in the world to be suspected of self-assertion, and his modesty was one of his most special qualities.

He was a charitable, religious, gentle, truly good man. A genuine man, incapable of pretence or of concealment. He had been a sailor once; and all the best characteristics that are popularly attributed to sailors, being his, and being in him refined by the influences of his Art, formed a whole not likely to be often seen. There is no smile that the writer can recall, like his; no manner so naturally confiding and so cheerfully engaging. When the writer saw him for the last time on earth, the smile and the manner shone out once through the weakness, still: the bright unchanging Soul within the altered face and form.

No man was ever held in higher respect by his friends, and yet his intimate friends invariably addressed him and spoke of him by a pet name. It may need, perhaps, the writer's memory and associations to find in this a touching expression of his winning character, his playful smile, and pleasant ways. "You know Mrs. Inchbald's story, Nature and Art?" wrote THOMAS HOOD, once, in a letter: "What a fine Edition of Nature and Art is STANFIELD!"

Gone! And many and many a dear old day gone with him. But their memories remain. And his memory will not soon fade out, for he has set his mark upon the restless waters, and his fame will long be sounded in the roar of the sea.

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*ROBERT KEELEY.

"THERE is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot; their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene; their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities."

So wrote the peerless English essayist, Charles Lamb, of one of the most original and quaint, as stage records tell

us, of English low comedians, Dodd. The feeling expressed in those lines comes home to us in connection with the admirable actor whom we have lately lost, with a touching appropriateness. And the appropriateness is increased by the marked resemblance that must have existed between the peculiarities of Dodd and the peculiarities of Keeley. "In expressing slowness of apprehension" (says Charles Lamb), "this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expression of his broad moony face, over all its quarters, with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and, for lack of fuel, go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder."

There is a world of imaginativeness, of course, in this charming piece of descriptive writing. Dodd himself would, perhaps, have been somewhat astonished to hear that he could convey all this with a look, and that his countenance was as full of meaning as Lord Burleigh's nod. But, due allowance made for Lamb's style, we detect in this passage a piece of thoughtful and appreciative criticism, so vivid, that to those to whom Elia's essays are familiar (as they should be to all lovers of pure English), the fortunate actor whom he commemorates seems a living reality. To see Keeley act, especially in the part of Sir Andrew Aguecheek—it was to Dodd's performance of that character that Charles Lamb in his essay specially alluded—was to create, in fancy, an irresistible association with this criticism, and to feel that what was written of Dodd might have been written of the actor of our time. Who does not confess how infinitely more telling wit is, when the speaker's face seems all unconscious of the humour of his words? There is an infection of pleasantness, no doubt, in the man who laughs heartily at his own fun; but he always gives us an impression of being like the child who writes under the efforts of his early art, "This is a horse;" "This is a dog," in order that there may be no

mistake about them. "This is a joke—laugh at it." The grave humorist, who is a perpetual puzzle—leaving us never able to make out whether he is in fun or earnest—may have less universal power to please; but over those whom he does please, his power is much greater. The quietness and subtlety of Keeley might have prevented him from being such a favourite as he was, with the many, but for the personal peculiarities which, in his case, supplied the breadth of effect that was absent from his delicate acting. The quaint figure in its diminutive rotundity, and the "expansion of the broad moony face," were irresistible in their suggestiveness of fun, even when the actor was gravest.

Dodd's face, it is easy to gather from Elia's description, must have been a triumph of gravity. Indeed, we are told, in the same essay, that he wore, in private life, a countenance "full of thought and carefulness." Lamb meets Dodd, for some months retired from the stage, strolling in the Temple-gardens, and judges him, "from his grave air and deportment, to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn." On closer inspection, he detects his mistake. "Was this the face," he says—"manly, sober, intelligent—which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury." This gravity of face and bearing which distinguished Dodd among the "pleasant fellows" of his time was the inheritance of Keeley, just as the infectious spirits and sprightliness of Bannister were revived in Harley.

Low Comedy is no limited sphere; it ranges over many and various degrees of art and acting, from the comedy of Touchstone and Dogberry, to the broad humour or no-humour of modern farce. Through all these various degrees, Keeley was equally admirable. Harley was an excellent artist in his way; but he was always full of his own humour, and showed it, as much as to say, "See how funny I am!" His audiences were willing enough to admit that he was, and indeed who could help it? but Keeley's was the truer art. In their respective performances of Dogberry, the difference was remarkable. The blunders of the old constable fell from Harley's lips as if he felt their absurdity, and enjoyed it; from Keeley's, with the most im-

movable and pompous stolidity, as from one who believed that the whole weight of Messina was on his shoulders, and that he was well worthy to bear it, and well able to bear it. If anybody had told the one Dogberry that he was a funny fellow, tempted thereto by the merry twinkle in his eye, he would have been treated to a glass of liquor at the nearest wine-shop; if he had so far forgotten himself as to offer such an insult to the dignity of the other, he would have been incontinently "moved on," or comprehended as a vagrom man of the most dangerous sort. No doubt in some characters, Harley's face and style, expressing mirthfulness in activity, gave him an advantage; as in Lancelot Gobbo, who is eminently a "wag," or believes himself one, and of whom it may be true that the total want of point betrayed by many of his utterances was intentional—a satirical comment on the funny man who, because he is very amusing sometimes, "will always be flouting," and often fails in being anything but silly. But the majority of Shakespeare's "clowns" are unconscious or saddened humorists; and their jokes are far more in keeping with the grave face than the gay. Sometimes we meet with two of them placed side by side in sharp contrast; and that contrast can never have been better realised than by Keeley and Harley in the same play; as when the former played Sir Andrew to the Clown of the latter, in that very comedy of *Twelfth Night*, about which Charles Lamb gossips so delightfully. The contrast was even more effectively shown in Sheridan's *Rivals*, when Harley was the Acres, and Keeley the David. His more ambitious successors of the present day would scarcely submit to the degradation of playing David, to the Acres of a fellow-comedian of even equal standing in the salary-list of their theatre, however much nature may have fitted them for the one part and unfitted them for the other. Keeley knew better; and what a delicious David he was! Though forced by the false, though most attractive art which inspired that school of comedy, to talk in a succession of epigrams, as rounded and brilliant as the wittiest fashionable of them all, Keeley made David a miracle of stolid rusticity: a man of one idea, very much in earnest, both in his disgust with his master's follies and in his anxiety for him—which in Keeley's hands acquired a touch of pathos from the devotion of the man.

For Keeley was a master of pathos in his way, and many of our most delightful memories of him are connected with characters into which, by a few words or a little touch, he threw a certain homely tenderness quite his own. He never strained that chord too far, but struck it, as it were, in passing, relying upon delicate ears to catch the sound as it fell. By the general public, perhaps, this power of his was not as fully recognised as it might have been. Poor Robson could make his audience laugh and cry alternately, at his will; and that he could do so was due to what was really an artistic defect in his acting. He was an actor of genius; but of subtlety he had little or none. He did not hint himself to his audience; he threw himself broadly at them; and he could bound at once, without preparation or gradation, from pathos to fun. Not so Keeley; subtle his acting was, in the highest degree; and his light and shade were most delicately and beautifully blended. He must have suffered sometimes, from the misplaced laughter of gods and groundlings (stalls not always excepted), at moments when his own eyes were filled with tears. For he was too sensitive an artist not to feel, when his part gave scope for feeling. All audiences, however, contain some delicate perception; and it is not only by critics and constant playgoers, that Keeley is remembered as among the most touching, as well as the drollest, of actors.

Of the personal regard of the public, he had an extraordinary share. One great difference between French and English audiences is, that the former have the highest feeling for the art, the latter for the artist. The noisy "receptions" which a favourite actor obtains with us, whenever he appears on the stage, are sometimes rather excessive in their demonstration; but they are very infectious, withal, in their enthusiasm, and are doubtless most inspiriting to the performer. At a French theatre, an actor, however established his reputation and great his popularity, often has no "reception"; the tribute is confined to special occasions, as when he appears in some part which he has "created." It is the part, as it were, that is applauded in advance, and not the artist. There is something pleasant in the personal affection of a British audience, who make no such nice distinctions. Of that personal regard which unites us with our theatrical favourites, Keeley had a lion's share, and it followed him in his re-

tirement so faithfully, that when the town heard of his death the other day, it regretted him as much as if he had left the world and the stage together.

In one sense, indeed, he did so: for though it was to all intents and purposes certain for some time past that he would never act again, he took no formal farewell of the theatre—a device, which is painful when it is real, as too rude and material a severing of the link between actor and public; but which of late years has been too often a fiction—a prelude to a succession of "last appearances" which provoke laughter and extinguish regret. We have no drawbacks of that nature on our recollections of Keeley; and we have still the consolation of hoping that his other half, the partner of his name and popularity—so closely united with him that we can never think of the one without the other—may not be entirely lost to the stage. We saw Keeley act on the occasion which proved to be his last appearance, when he played his old part of Dolly Spanker: one of the most finished figures in his portrait gallery. The little trot across the stage—the "Here I am, Gay,"—the grotesque devotion and not unmanly weakness of the doting husband—made up a picture whose colours time had not in the least blurred or faded when he played for the last time. The stage was as elastic under his feet as it ever was in his best days; and he never allowed us to feel that he had outstayed his time. Ah! The *laudatores temporis acti* have reason on their side when they talk of the theatrical companies of old days, if there were many like him!

We do not profess in this little paper to attempt anything like an exhaustive criticism on Keeley's acting, or, indeed, anything that can properly be called criticism. Our purpose does not extend beyond a few words of admiring remembrance and regret: a momentary lingering on lost intellectual delights. We have mentioned his Dogberry. As we write, we hear again the very inflections of his voice, and see again the wonderful expression of his face, at the supreme moment when he was called an Ass! No other catastrophe on earth, or in the waters under it, could have aroused in living man such an amazing exposition of stupendous astonishment, indignation, and incredulity, as that insult wrung from Dogberry as Keeley drew him. But his Verges was even finer. By the force of his profound belief in Dogberry, one may say that he absorbed

that Jackass into himself, sublimated and enhanced the drollery of the character, and made it all his own. The more preposterous Dogberry, the more steeped and lost in admiration he. When Dogberry was most ridiculous Verges wandered away through the broadest realms of speculation, how the Heavens ever came to make a man so wondrous wise. It was a true triumph of Art. Considered with a reference to the very few words set down for Verges, it was certainly the most finished and thoughtful piece of suggestive comic acting that one can easily imagine possible. And it culminated when his asinine chief patted him on the head, and he first bent under the honour, and then became the taller for it, gazing into his patron's face with an expression of fatuous contentment perfectly marvellous.

In the melodrama of the *Sergeant's Wife*, where he and Mrs. Keeley played two innocent fellow-servants in a murdering household, most delightfully, his terrors were of the very finest order of acting. We can see him now, when the principal murderer, his master, patted him on the head, and praised him for a good lad, sinking and sinking under the blood-stained hand until the hand stopped, finding nothing to touch. In the *Loan of a Lover*, his Peter Spyk had no approach to a parallel that ever we have seen, on the English, French, or Italian stage. Its immovable stolidity, and apparent insensibility to everything but a big pipe, until he made the tender discovery that he loved the little woman who had grown up about him from a child—and its pathos when that truth burst upon him concurrently with the information that she was going to be married to some one else—were simply beyond praise. For the richest humour, his reading of a letter in *Betsy Baker* may be quoted: or his extraordinary devices for getting out of the room, in *Your Life's in Danger*, where he had to pass a man at breakfast who he thought might stop him by the way. Foremost among the pleasantest laughing faces we have ever seen at a Theatre, is our recollection of the Queen's face and its natural unrestrained abandonment to the humour of the scene, when, in *A Thumping Legacy*—at Drury Lane in Mr. Macready's time years ago—Keeley received the intelligence that he had come to Corsica not so much to inherit a property as to inherit a Vendetta, and, in supreme vexation of spirit, suddenly and surprisingly hit out at his informant after the British manner. There was

once an unsuccessful piece at the Lyceum, founded on a charming tale by Washington Irving. We do not recall a single point in Keeley's part except that he *had seen a ghost before the curtain rose.* That he had indubitably seen it, and that he went about ever afterwards expecting to see it again, the audience knew as well as he did from the moment of his first entrance.

We are not thankful enough to great actors for the relief they give us, and the good they do us. These are but a few untwined Forget-me-Nots scattered on a great actor's grave. In private, he had the heart of a child, and the integrity of the noblest man.

LANDOR'S LIFE.

PREFIXED to the second volume of Mr. Forster's admirable biography of *Walter Savage Landor*,[1] is an engraving from a portrait of that remarkable man when seventy-seven years of age, by Boxall. The writer of these lines can testify that the original picture is a singularly good likeness, the result of close and subtle observation on the part of the painter; but, for this very reason, the engraving gives a most inadequate idea of the merit of the picture, and the character of the man.

From the engraving, the arms and hands are omitted. In the picture, they are, as they were in nature, indispensable to a correct reading of the vigorous face. The arms were very peculiar. They were rather short, and were curiously restrained and checked in their action, at the elbows; in the action of the hands, even when separately clenched, there was the same kind of pause, and a noticeable tendency of relaxation on the part of the thumb. Let the face be never so intense or fierce, there was a commentary of gentleness in the hands, essential to be taken along with it. Like Hamlet, Landor would speak daggers but use none. In the expression of his hands, though angrily closed, there was always gentleness and tenderness; just as when they were open, and the handsome old gentleman would wave

[1] Walter Savage Landor, a Biography by John Forster, 2 Vols., Chapman and Hall.

them with a little courtly flourish that sat well upon him, as he recalled some classic compliment that he had rendered to some reigning Beauty, there was a chivalrous grace about them such as pervades his softer verses. Thus, the fictitious Mr. Boythorn (to whom we may refer without impropriety in this connection, as Mr. Forster does) declaims "with unimaginable energy" the while his bird is "perched upon his thumb," and he "softly smooths its feathers with his forefinger."

From the spirit of Mr. Forster's Biography these characteristic hands are never omitted, and hence (apart from its literary merits) its great value. As the same masterly writer's Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith is a generous and yet conscientious picture of a period, so this is a not less generous and yet conscientious picture of one life; of a life, with all its aspirations, achievements, and disappointments; all its capabilities, opportunities, and irretrievable mistakes. It is essentially a sad book, and herein lies proof of its truth and worth. The life of almost any man possessing great gifts, would be a sad book to himself; and this book enables us not only to see its subject, but to be its subject if we will.

Mr. Forster is of opinion that "Landor's fame very surely awaits him." This point admitted or doubted, the value of the book remains the same. It needs not to know his works (otherwise than through his biographer's exposition), it needs not to have known himself, to find a deep interest in these pages. More or less of their warning is in every conscience; and some admiration of a fine genius, and of a great, wild, generous nature, incapable of mean self-extenuation or dissimulation—if unhappily incapable of self-repression too—should be in every breast. "There may be still living many persons," Walter Landor's brother, Robert, writes to Mr. Forster of this book, "who would contradict any narrative of yours in which the best qualities were remembered, the worst forgotten." Mr. Forster's comment is: "I had not waited for this appeal to resolve, that, if this memoir were written at all, it should contain, as far as might lie within my power, a fair statement of the truth." And this eloquent passage of truth immediately follows: "Few of his infirmities are without something kindly or generous about them; and we are not long in discovering there is nothing so wildly incredible that he

will not himself in perfect good faith believe. When he published his first book of poems on quitting Oxford, the profits were to be reserved for a distressed clergyman. When he published his Latin poems, the poor of Leipzig were to have the sum they realised. When his comedy was ready to be acted, a Spaniard who had sheltered him at Castro was to be made richer by it. When he competed for the prize of the Academy of Stockholm, it was to go to the poor of Sweden. If nobody got anything from any one of these enterprises, the fault at all events was not his. With his extraordinary power of forgetting disappointments, he was prepared at each successive failure to start afresh, as if each had been a triumph. I shall have to delineate this peculiarity as strongly in the last half as in the first half of his life, and it was certainly an amiable one. He was ready at all times to set aside, out of his own possessions, something for somebody who might please him for the time; and when frailties of temper and tongue are noted, this other eccentricity should not be omitted. He desired eagerly the love as well as the good opinion of those whom for the time he esteemed, and no one was more affectionate while under such influences. It is not a small virtue to feel such genuine pleasure, as he always did in giving and receiving pleasure. His generosity, too, was bestowed chiefly on those who could make small acknowledgment in thanks and no return in kind."

Some of his earlier contemporaries may have thought him a vain man. Most assuredly he was not, in the common acceptation of the term. A vain man has little or no admiration to bestow upon competitors. Landor had an inexhaustible fund. He thought well of his writings, or he would not have preserved them. He said and wrote that he thought well of them, because that was his mind about them, and he said and wrote his mind. He was one of the few men of whom you might always know the whole; of whom you might always know the worst, as well as the best. He had no reservations or duplicities. "No, by Heaven!" he would say ("with unimaginable energy"), if any good adjective were coupled with him which he did not deserve: "I am nothing of the kind: I wish I were; but I don't deserve the attribute, and I never did, and I never shall!" His intense consciousness of himself never led to his poorly excusing himself, and seldom to his violently

asserting himself. When he told some little story of his bygone social experiences, in Florence, or where not, as he was fond of doing, it took the innocent form of making all the interlocutors, Landors. It was observable, too, that they always called him "Mr. Landor"—rather ceremoniously and submissively. There was a certain "Caro Padre Abate Marina"—invariably so addressed in these anecdotes—who figures through a great many of them, and who always expressed himself in this deferential tone.

Mr. Forster writes of Landor's character thus:

"A man must be judged, at first, by what he says and does. But with him such extravagance as I have referred to was little more than the habitual indulgence (on such themes) of passionate feelings and language, indecent indeed but utterly purposeless; the mere explosion of wrath provoked by tyranny or cruelty; the irregularities of an overheated steam-engine too weak for its own vapour. It is very certain that no one could detest oppression more truly than Landor did in all seasons and times; and if no one expressed that scorn, that abhorrence of tyranny and fraud, more hastily or more intemperately, all his fire and fury signified really little else than ill-temper too easily provoked. Not to justify or excuse such language, but to explain it, this consideration is urged. If not uniformly placable, Landor was always compassionate. He was tender-hearted rather than bloody-minded at all times, and upon only the most partial acquaintance with his writings could other opinion be formed. A completer knowledge of them would satisfy any one that he had as little real disposition to kill a king as to kill a mouse. In fact there is not a more marked peculiarity in his genius than the union with its strength of a most uncommon gentleness, and in the personal ways of the man this was equally manifest."
—*Vol.* I. *p.* 496.

Of his works, thus:

"Though his mind was cast in the antique mould, it had opened itself to every kind of impression through a long and varied life; he has written with equal excellence in both poetry and prose, which can hardly be said of any of his contemporaries; and perhaps the single epithet by which his books would be best described is that reserved exclusively for books not characterised only by genius, but also by special individuality They are unique. Having

possessed them, we should miss them. Their place would be supplied by no others. They have that about them, moreover, which renders it almost certain that they will frequently be resorted to in future time. There are none in the language more quotable. Even where impulsiveness and want of patience have left them most fragmentary, this rich compensation is offered to the reader. There is hardly a conceivable subject, in life or literature, which they do not illustrate by striking aphorisms, by concise and profound observations, by wisdom ever applicable to the needs of men, and by wit as available for their enjoyment. Nor, above all, will there anywhere be found a more pervading passion for liberty, a fiercer hatred of the base, a wider sympathy with the wronged and the oppressed, or help more ready at all times for those who fight at odds and disadvantage against the powerful and the fortunate, than in the writings of Walter Savage Landor."—*Last page of second volume.*

The impression was strong upon the present writer's mind, as on Mr. Forster's, during years of close friendship with the subject of this biography, that his animosities were chiefly referable to the singular inability in him to dissociate other people's ways of thinking from his own. He had, to the last, a ludicrous grievance (both Mr. Forster and the writer have often amused themselves with it), against a good-natured nobleman, doubtless perfectly unconscious of having ever giving him offence. The offence was, that on the occasion of some dinner party in another nobleman's house, many years before, this innocent lord (then a commoner) had passed in to dinner, through some door, before him, as he himself was about to pass in through that same door with a lady on his arm. Now, Landor was a gentleman of most scrupulous politeness, and in his carriage of himself towards ladies there was a certain mixture of stateliness and deference, belonging to quite another time and, as Mr. Pepys would observe, "mighty pretty to see." If he could by any effort imagine himself committing such a high crime and misdemeanour as that in question, he could only imagine himself as doing it of a set purpose, under the sting of some vast injury, to inflict a great affront. A deliberately designed affront on the part of another man, it therefore remained to the end of his days. The manner in which, as time went on, he per-

meated the unfortunate lord's ancestry with this offence, was whimsically characteristic of Landor. The writer remembers very well, when only the individual himself was held responsible in the story for the breach of good breeding; but in another ten years or so, it began to appear that his father had always been remarkable for ill manners; and in yet another ten years or so, his grandfather developed into quite a prodigy of coarse behaviour.

Mr. Boythorn—if he may again be quoted—said of his adversary, Sir Leicester Dedlock: "That fellow is, *and his father was, and his grandfather was*, the most stiff-necked, arrogant, imbecile, pig-headed numskull, ever, by some inexplicable mistake of Nature, born in any station of life but a walking-stick's!"

The strength of some of Mr. Landor's most captivating kind qualities was traceable to the same source. Knowing how keenly he himself would feel the being at any small social disadvantage, or the being unconsciously placed in any ridiculous light, he was wonderfully considerate of shy people, or of such as might be below the level of his usual conversation, or otherwise out of their element. The writer once observed him in the keenest distress of mind in behalf of a modest young stranger who came into a drawing-room with a glove on his head. An expressive commentary on this sympathetic condition, and on the delicacy with which he advanced to the young stranger's rescue, was afterwards furnished by himself at a friendly dinner at Gore House, when it was the most delightful of houses. His dress—say his cravat or shirt-collar—had become slightly disarranged on a hot evening, and Count D'Orsay laughingly called his attention to the circumstance as we rose from table. Landor became flushed, and greatly agitated: "My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you! My dear Count D'Orsay, I thank you from my soul for pointing out to me the abominable condition to which I am reduced! If I had entered the drawing-room and presented myself before Lady Blessington in so absurd a light, I would have instantly gone home, put a pistol to my head, and blown my brains out!"

Mr. Forster tells a similar story of his keeping a company waiting dinner, through losing his way; and of his seeing no remedy for that breach of politeness but cutting his throat, or drowning himself, unless a countryman whom

he met could direct him by a short road to the house where the party were assembled. Surely these are expressive notes on the gravity and reality of his explosive inclinations to kill kings!

His manner towards boys was charming, and the earnestness of his wish to be on equal terms with them and to win their confidence was quite touching. Few, reading Mr. Forster's book, can fail to see in this his pensive remembrance of that "studious wilful boy at once shy and impetuous," who had not many intimacies at Rugby, but who was "generally popular and respected, and used his influence often to save the younger boys from undue harshness or violence." The impulsive yearnings of his passionate heart towards his own boy, on their meeting at Bath, after years of separation, likewise burn through this phase of his character.

But a more spiritual, softened, and unselfish aspect of it was to be derived from his respectful belief in happiness which he himself had missed. His marriage had not been a felicitous one—it may be fairly assumed for either side—but not a trace of bitterness or distrust concerning other marriages was in his mind. He was never more serene than in the midst of a domestic circle, and was invariably remarkable for a perfectly benignant interest in young couples and young lovers. That, in his ever-fresh fancy, he conceived in this association innumerable histories of himself involving far more unlikely events that never happened than Isaac D'Israeli ever imagined, is hardly to be doubted; but as to this part of his real history he was mute, or revealed his nobleness in an impulse to be generously just. We verge on delicate ground, but a slight remembrance rises in the writer which can grate nowhere. Mr. Forster relates how a certain friend, being in Florence, sent him home a leaf from the garden of his old house at Fiesole. That friend had first asked him what he should send him home, and he had stipulated for this gift—found by Mr. Forster among his papers after his death. The friend, on coming back to England, related to Landor that he had been much embarrassed, on going in search of the leaf, by his driver's suddenly stopping his horses in a narrow lane, and presenting him (the friend) to "La Signora Landora." The lady was walking alone on a bright, Italian winter-day; and the man, having been told to drive to the Villa

Landora, inferred that he must be conveying a guest or visitor. "I pulled off my hat," said the friend, "apologised for the coachman's mistake, and drove on. The lady was walking with a rapid and firm step, had bright eyes, a fine fresh colour. and looked animated and agreeable." Landor checked off each clause of the description, with a stately nod of more than ready assent, and replied, with all his tremendous energy concentrated into the sentence: "And the Lord forbid that I should do otherwise then declare that she always was agreeable—to every one but *me!*"

Mr. Forster step by step builds up the evidence on which he writes this life and states this character. In like manner, he gives the evidence for his high estimation of Landor's works, and—it may be added—for their recompense against some neglect, in finding so sympathetic, acute, and devoted a champion. Nothing in the book is more remarkable than his examination of each of Landor's successive pieces of writing, his delicate discernment of their beauties, and his strong desire to impart his own perceptions in this wise to the great audience that is yet to come. It rarely befalls an author to have such a commentator: to become the subject of so much artistic skill and knowledge, combined with such infinite and loving pains. Alike as a piece of Biography, and as a commentary upon the beauties of a great writer, the book is a massive book; as the man and the writer were massive too. Sometimes, when the balance held by Mr. Forster has seemed for a moment to turn a little heavily against the infirmities of temperament of a grand old friend, we have felt something of a shock; but we have not once been able to gainsay the justice of the scales. This feeling, too, has only fluttered out of the detail, here or there, and has vanished before the whole. We fully agree with Mr. Forster, that "Judgment has been passed"—as it should be—"with an equal desire to be only just on all the qualities of his temperament which affected necessarily not his own life only. But, now that the story is told, no one will have difficulty in striking the balance between its good and ill; and what was really imperishable in Landor's genius will not be treasured less, or less understood, for the more perfect knowledge of his character."

Mr. Forster's second volume gives a facsimile of Landor's writing at seventy-five. It may be interesting to

those who are curious in calligraphy to know that its resemblance to the recent handwriting of that great genius, M. Victor Hugo, is singularly strong.

In a military burial-ground in India, the name of Walter Landor is associated with the present writer's, over the grave of a young officer. No name could stand there, more inseparably associated in the writer's mind with the dignity of generosity: with a noble scorn of all littleness, all cruelty, oppression, fraud, and false pretence.

NOTES ON REPRINTED PIECES.

A Child's Dream of a Star.

Of this little story Dickens wrote to John Forster in March, 1850: "Looking over the suggested contents of number two"—number two of "Household Words," that is—"at breakfast this morning, I felt an uneasy sense of there being a want of something tender, which would apply to some universal household knowledge. Coming down in the railroad the other night (always a wonderfully suggestive place to me when I am alone), I was looking at the stars, and revolving a little idea about them. Putting now these two things together, I wrote the enclosed little paper, straightway." Forster adds: "His sister Fanny and himself, he told me long before this paper was written, used to wander at night about a churchyard near their house, looking up at the stars; and her early death had vividly reawakened all the childish associations which made her memory dear to him."

Perfect Felicity.

The dog was probably right when he said that there was more than one Happy Family on view in the streets of London when this paper was written; but for some years the cages on wheels which contained the odd collection of creatures here enumerated have ceased to be among the sights of the town. Regent Street and the corner of Trafalgar Square, opposite St. Martin's Church, were the favourite "pitches" for the best known of these perambulating menageries. The Mr. Hudson alluded to was the speculator who, in the early days of railways, was known as the "Railway King," and subsequently, like Mr. Veneering in "Our Mutual Friend," made a resounding smash of it. The members of the raven's suggested Happy Family of men were, of course, selected for the extreme diver-

gence of their aims and views. Except in the cases of the Rajah Brooke of Sarawak and Cardinal Wiseman, they are all forgotten now. Sir Peter Laurie was an egregious alderman of the city of London, who once declared his intention of "putting down" suicide among other things, and was satirised as Alderman Cute.

From the Raven in the Happy Family.—I.

Astley's was at that time, and for many years after, a famous London theatre for equestrian drama and "scenes in the circle." "Our proprietor's wife's" mission shows that what is absurdly called "the New Woman" is at least more than half a century old. "One Gorham and a Privy Council" refers to a famous ecclesiastical lawsuit of that period, now altogether forgotten except by a few lawyers and ardent churchmen.

From the Raven in the Happy Family.—II.

And see "Medicine Men of Civilisation," in "The Uncommercial Traveller"; the description of the funeral of Mrs. Gargery, in "Great Expectations"; the account of Mr. Mould and his business, in "Martin Chuzzlewit"; and the directions as to his own burial, in Charles Dickens's will.

From the Raven in the Happy Family.—III.

Vauxhall and Cremorne Gardens were built over many years ago, and Greenwich Fair has also long ceased to exist. The Nepaulese Princes have had many successors—Shahs of Persia, Afghan princes, and the like—and the raven's description of the imbecilities of "society" in such cases is as true to-day as it was in 1850; while the British public in general were even more foolish about the sale of the elephant Jumbo to Barnum in 1882 than they were about the first hippopotamus at the Zoölogical Gardens. The "good-natured, amiable old Duke" was the then recently deceased Duke of Cambridge.

The Begging-Letter Writer.

These are all actual personal experiences, "without a particle of exaggeration," John Forster says. In 1846

Dickens had occasion to write to W. H. Wills, at that time sub-editor of the "Daily News": "Do look at the enclosed from Mrs. What's-her-name. For a surprising audacity it is remarkable even to me, who am positively bullied, and all but beaten, by these people. I wish you would do me the favour to write to her (in your own name and from your own address), stating that you answered the letter as you did, because if I were the wealthiest nobleman in England I could not keep pace with one-twentieth part of the demands upon me, and because you saw no internal evidence in her application to induce you to single it out for any especial notice. That the tone of this letter renders you exceedingly glad that you did so; and that you decline, from me, holding any correspondence with her. Something to that effect, after what flourish your nature will."

Forster, in mentioning this essay, says that in describing "the extent to which he was made a victim by this class of swindler, and the extravagance of the devices practised on him," he "had not confessed as he might, that for much of what he suffered he was himself responsible, by giving so largely, as at first he did, to almost everyone who applied to him," Forster also tells the following story: "The Mendicity Society's officers had caught a notorious begging-letter writer, had identified him as an old offender against Dickens of which proofs were found on his person, and had put matters in train for his proper punishment: when the wretched creature's wife made such appeal before the case was heard at the police-court, that Dickens broke down in his capacity of prosecutor, and at the last moment, finding what was said of the man's distress at the time to be true, relented. 'When the mendicity officers themselves told me the man was in distress I desired them to suppress what they knew about him, and slipped out of the bundle (in the police office) his first letter, which was the greatest lie of all. For he looked wretched, and his wife had been waiting about the street to see me, all the morning. It was an exceedingly bad case, however, and the imposition, all through, very great indeed. Insomuch that I could not *say* anything in his favour, even when I saw him. Yet I was not sorry that the creature found the loophole for escape. The officers had taken him illegally without any warrant;

and really they messed it all through, quite facetiously.'"

Even during his stay in Paris in 1846–1847 the begging-letter writers found out "Monsieur Dickens, le romancier célèbre," and waylaid him at the door and in the street as boldly as in London, "their distinguishing peculiarity being that they were nearly all of them 'Chevaliers de la Garde Imperiale de sa Majesté Napoleon le Grand,' and that their letters bore immense seals with coats of arms as large as five-shilling pieces."

And see the article on "Tramps" in "The Uncommercial Traveller" and Mr. Boffin's experiences, after he came into his property, in "Our Mutual Friend."

A Walk in a Workhouse.

And see "A Small Star in the East," "Wapping Workhouse," and "Night Walks," in "The Uncommercial Traveller."

The Detective Police.

These are real stories told by real detectives, and are consequently altogether unlike the so-called detective stories which have been overrunning English and American literature for so many weary years. Inspector Wield was Inspector Field, and afterwards sat—corpulent forefinger and all—for Inspector Bucket in "Bleak House."

A Poor Man's Tale of a Patent.

All matters of this kind in England have been greatly simplified and cheapened since 1850, and Deputy Chaffwax and his crew have been reformed out of existence.

Bill-Sticking.

The Advertising vans, on the invention of which the King of the Bill-Stickers so greatly prided himself, obstructed the traffic to such an extent at last as to become intolerable nuisances and were speedily abolished by the police. Bill-posting generally has made great strides since His Majesty furnished the information given in this paper. The third paragraph in this article refers to prominent advertisers of that day.

On Duty with Inspector Field.

This paper was photographically true when it was written, but the very worst parts of London would have to be exhaustively searched nowadays before the experiences which it describes could be even approached. The efficient administration of the Common Lodging Houses Act, known as Lord Shaftesbury's, has vastly improved all such matters.

Our Watering-Place.

"Our Watering-Place" was the little village of Broadstairs in Kent, and, although the place has greatly increased in size, owing to the building of many houses near the railway—there was no railway nearer than Ramsgate when this paper was written— time has brought about but few changes in its sea-front and its queer little streets.

There is at Broadstairs an excellent illustration of the manner in which delusive legends grow up on the smallest foundations. On the cliff overlooking the little pier, and close to the coast-guard station, stands Fort House, a tall and very conspicuous place which Charles Dickens rented during more than one summer. This is now known as Bleak House because, according to a tradition on which the natives positively insist, "Bleak House" was written there. Unfortunately for the legend, it is the fact that although "Bleak House" was written in many places—Dover, Brighton, Boulogne, London, and where not—not a line of it was written at Broadstairs.

Writing to Professor Felton on the 1st of September, 1843, Charles Dickens described Broadstairs in the following words: "This is a little fishing-place; intensely quiet; built on a cliff, whereon—in the centre of a tiny semicircular bay—our house stands; the sea rolling and dashing under the windows. Seven miles out are the Goodwin Sands (you've heard of the Goodwin Sands?), whence floating lights perpetually wink after dark, as if they were carrying on intrigues with the servants. Also there is a big lighthouse called the North Foreland on a hill behind the village, a severe parsonic light, which reproves the young and giddy floaters, and stares grimly out upon the sea. Under the cliff are rare good sands, where all the children assemble every morning and throw

up impossible fortifications, which the sea throws down again at high water. Old gentlemen and ancient ladies flirt after their own manner in two reading-rooms and on a great many scattered seats in the open air. Other old gentlemen look all day through telescopes and never see anything. In a bay-window in a one-pair sits, from nine o'clock to one, a gentleman with rather long hair and no neckcloth, who writes and grins as if he thought he were very funny indeed. His name is Boz. At one he disappears, and presently emerges from a bathing-machine, and may be seen—a kind of salmon-coloured porpoise—splashing about in the ocean. After that he may be seen in another bay-window on the ground floor, eating a strong lunch; after that, walking a dozen miles or so, or lying on his back in the sand reading a book. Nobody bothers him unless they know he is disposed to be talked to; and I am told he is very comfortable indeed. He's as brown as a berry and they do say is a small fortune to the innkeeper who sells beer and cold punch. But this is mere rumour."

A Flight.

"To Paris in eleven hours" was considered a great feat in 1851. Since the time was reduced to seven or eight hours there has been demand, of course, for still further reduction.

"Meat-chell" was Mr. Mitchell, the manager of the French plays which were at that time given at the St. James's Theatre.

And see "The Calais Night-Mail" and "Aboard Ship," in "The Uncommercial Traveller"; and "Our French Watering-Place," in the present volume.

Our School.

And see "Dullborough Town" in "The Uncommercial Traveller"; and "The Schoolboy's Story" and "The Ghost in Master B's Room" (chapter ii. of "The Haunted House"), in the volume of "Christmas Stories."

Our Honourable Friend.

Charles Dickens had but a poor opinion of Parliaments and members of Parliament. John Forster remarks,

speaking of the conclusion of his career as a reporter in the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, that "his observation while there had not led him to form any high opinion of the House of Commons or its heroes; and that, of the Pickwickian sense which so often takes the place of common sense in our legislature, he omitted no opportunity of declaring his contempt at every part of his life."

Many years after the publication of this paper Charles Dickens wrote quite in the Carlyle vein: "I declare that as to all matters on the face of the teeming earth, it appears to me that the House of Commons and Parliament altogether is become just the dreariest failure and nuisance that ever bothered this much-bothered world."

And see the elections in "Pickwick" and "Our Mutual Friend."

Lying Awake.

The London Tavern in Bishopsgate Within, over against the offices of Messrs. Baring Brothers & Co., was a great place for public dinners when this paper was written, and Mr. Bathe was its proprietor. It has long ceased to exist.

Public executions are, happily, things of the past. The Mannings were a man and his wife who murdered one O'Connor—the paramour of the woman—under circumstances of great atrocity and treachery. "I never liked him," Manning said in his confession, "so I finished him off with the ripping-chisel."

The Morgue was continually obtruding itself on Charles Dickens's thoughts. See "Travelling Abroad," and "Some Recollections of Mortality" in "The Uncommercial Traveller."

Flogging has of late years proved very effectual as a punishment for robbery with violence, and has not been attended by the evil consequences apprehended in this paper.

Down with the Tide.

There is no toll-taker now at Waterloo, or at any of the other London Bridges. They are all free.

Frauds on the Fairies.

George Cruikshank, artist, caricaturist, and extreme teetotaller, had published at about this time a version of the story of "Hop o' my Thumb," specially designed to advance his own special views. Dickens thereupon wrote to Mr. W. H. Wills: "I have thought of another article to be called 'Frauds upon the Fairies,' apropos of George Cruikshank's editing. Half playfully and half seriously, I mean to protest most strongly against alterations, for any purpose of the beautiful little stories which are so tenderly and humanly useful to us in these times, when the world is so much with us, early and late; and then to rewrite 'Cinderella,' according to Total Abstinence, Peace Society, and Bloomer principles, and expressly for their propagation."

E. Moses and Son were advertising tailors; Professor Holloway's pills are not unheard of now; Mary Wedlake was the name of a firm of agricultural implement-makers, who perpetually advertised their oat-bruising machine in words of the text.

And see "The Boiled Beef of New England" and "A Plea for Total Abstinence," in "The Uncommercial Traveller"; and "The Great Baby," in the present volume.

The Long Voyage.

Stories of shipwreck and disaster at sea always had a peculiar interest for Charles Dickens, and his library contained a great number of books on the subject. "The most beautiful and affecting incident" associated with a shipwreck was often in his mind. When "The Lighthouse" was produced at Tavistock House, in 1855, he set the story in ballad form to the music of Mr. George Linley's well-known song "Little Nell," and it was sung in the course of the piece by his eldest daughter. This piece is included in the collection of Dickens's poems.

Our French Watering-Place.

"Our French Watering-Place" was Boulogne. Here Dickens lived during the summers of 1853, 1854, and 1856, firstly, at the Villa des Moulineaux; secondly, at the Villa du Camp de Droite; and thirdly, again at the Mou-

lineaux. Both houses belonged to "M. Loyal-Devasseur," whose real name was Beaucourt-Mutuel, and of whom Dickens afterwards wrote: "I never did see such a gentle, kind heart." Dickens's descriptions, in letters to John Forster, of his Boulogne residence, and of the landlord whom he admired and loved, make us acquainted with some of the most delightful episodes in the novelist's experience. These letters are in Forster's "Life of Dickens."

Prince Bull.

This paper refers to the gross mismanagement of affairs during the Crimean War, and the shameful breakdown of the Circumlocution Departments which were supposed to be responsible for its proper conduct. In April, 1855, Dickens made on this subject his only political speech, at a meeting of the Administrative Reform Association in Drury Lane Theatre.

And see "The Great Tasmania's Cargo," in "The Uncommercial Traveller"; and "The Thousand and One Humbugs," in the present volume.

The Thousand and One Humbugs.

In this, the longest of Dickens's purely political squibs, it is only necessary to explain a few names and allusions. The Grand Vizier Parmastoon, then, was Lord Palmerston; Abaddeen, Lord Aberdeen, who had been made a knight of the Garter, apparently as a reward for his grotesque failure as Prime Minister during the Crimean War; Hansardadade is an allusion to Hansard's official Reports of the Parliamentary Debates; Brothartoon was Mr. Brotherton, a member of Parliament, whose hobby it was to try to get the House of Commons to adjourn at midnight; Mistaspeeka is, of course, Mr. Speaker; a Dowajah and the Penshunlist—the latter an institution not unknown in America—speak for themselves; Scarli Tapa referred to the official red tape; the Praymiah was the Prime Minister; Layardeen was Sir Henry (then Mr.) Layard, the explorer of Nineveh and a very "advanced" member of Parliament; Dizze was Mr. Disraeli; Darbee, Lord Derby; and Johnnee, Lord John Russell.

"Let me count you out" refers to the rule of the House

of Commons that no business can be transacted unless forty members are present. If any member reports, during a sitting, that there is a less number than forty present, the Speaker proceeds to count the House, and unless, during the process, the number is made up, the House stands adjourned.

And see "Prince Bull" in the present volume.

Out of Town.

For Pavilionstone read Folkestone.

Out of the Season.

The watering-place out of the season was Dover, and the place without a cliff was Deal. The Wedgington family incident was thus described in a letter to Miss Hogarth: "I went to the Dover Theatre on Friday night, which was a miserable spectacle. The pit is boarded over, and it is a drinking and smoking place. It was 'for the benefit of Mrs. ——,' and the town had been very extensively placarded with 'Don't forget Friday.' I made out four-and-ninepence (I am serious) in the house when I went in. We may have warmed up in the course of the evening to twelve shillings. A Jew played the grand piano; Mrs. —— sang no end of songs (with not a bad voice, poor creature); Mr. —— sang comic songs fearfully, and danced clog hornpipes capitally; and a miserable woman shivering in a shawl and bonnet sat in the side boxes all the evening, nursing Master ——, aged seven months. It was a most forlorn business, and I should have contributed a sovereign to the treasury if I had known how."

The "good Mr. Baines of Leeds" mentioned in this connection was one of those puritanical members of Parliament whose chief desire in life appears to be to deprive the people of any chance of amusing themselves, and whom Dickens detested with the utmost cordiality.

As to the "unprecedented chapter" Charles Dickens wrote to his wife: "I did nothing at Dover (except for 'Household Words') and have not begun 'Little Dorrit,' no. 8, yet. But I took twenty-mile walks in the fresh air, and perhaps in the long run did better than if I had been at work."

Douglas Jerrold.

Charles Dickens's love for Douglas Jerrold personally (they were friends for twenty years) was as great as his admiration of his brilliant intellect.

Leigh Hunt.

The two intimate literary friends of Leigh Hunt alluded to in this paper were Procter (Barry Cornwall) and John Forster. Leigh Hunt did not at first recognise himself in Skimpole ("Bleak House"), but there were plenty of good-natured friends to point out to him such resemblance as there was; and, as Forster says, "painful explanations followed," and, the time for redress being gone, "nothing was possible to Dickens but what amounted to a friendly evasion of the points really at issue." But he tried hard to put the matter right. His apology was frank and ample, but Leigh Hunt was at least excusable for thinking that a serious injury had been done him.

The Late Mr. Stanfield.

On the 18th of April, 1867, Charles Dickens wrote to Clarkson Stanfield, signing himself "ever, my dear Stanny, your faithful and affectionate." On the 19th of the following month he wrote to Mr. George Stanfield: "When I came up to the house this afternoon and saw what had happened, I had not the courage to ring, though I had thought I was fully prepared by what I heard when I called yesterday. No one of your father's friends can ever have loved him more dearly than I always did, or can have better known the worth of his noble character." Stanfield and Charles Dickens had been close and dear friends for nearly thirty years.

Landor's Life.

"In a military burial-ground in India, the name of Walter Landor is associated with the present writer's over the grave of a young officer." The young officer was Walter Landor Dickens, Charles Dickens's second son and Landor's godson, who died in Calcutta, on his way home invalided, on the 31st of December, 1863.

In his "Life of Landor" John Forster tells the following story: "Ten years after Landor had lost his home"—his house at Fiesole, near Florence—"an Englishman travelling in Italy, his friend and mine, visited the neighbourhood for his sake, drove out from Florence to Fiesole, and asked his coachman which was the villa in which the Landor family lived. 'He was a dull dog, and pointed to Boccaccio's. I didn't believe him. He was so deuced ready that I knew he lied. I went up to the convent, which is on a height, and was leaning on a dwarf wall basking in the noble view over a vast range of hill and valley, when a little peasant girl came up and began to point out the localities. *Ecco la Villa Landora!* was one of the first half-dozen sentences she spoke. My heart swelled as Landor's would have done when I looked down upon it, nestling among its olive-trees and vines, and with its upper windows (there are five above the door) open to the setting sun. Over the centre of these there is another story, set upon the house-top like a tower; and all Italy, except its sea, is melted down into the glowing landscape it commands. I plucked a leaf of ivy from the convent-garden as I looked; and here it is. For Landor, with my love.' So wrote Mr. Dickens to me from Florence on the 2nd of April, 1845; and when I turned over Landor's papers in the same month after an interval of exactly twenty years, the ivy-leaf was found carefully enclosed, with the letter in which I had sent it." "Dickens had asked him before leaving," Forster says in another place, "what he would most wish to have in remembrance of Italy. 'An ivy-leaf from Fiesole,' said Landor."

Landor was avowedly the original of Lawrence Boythorn in "Bleak House."

THE END.

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